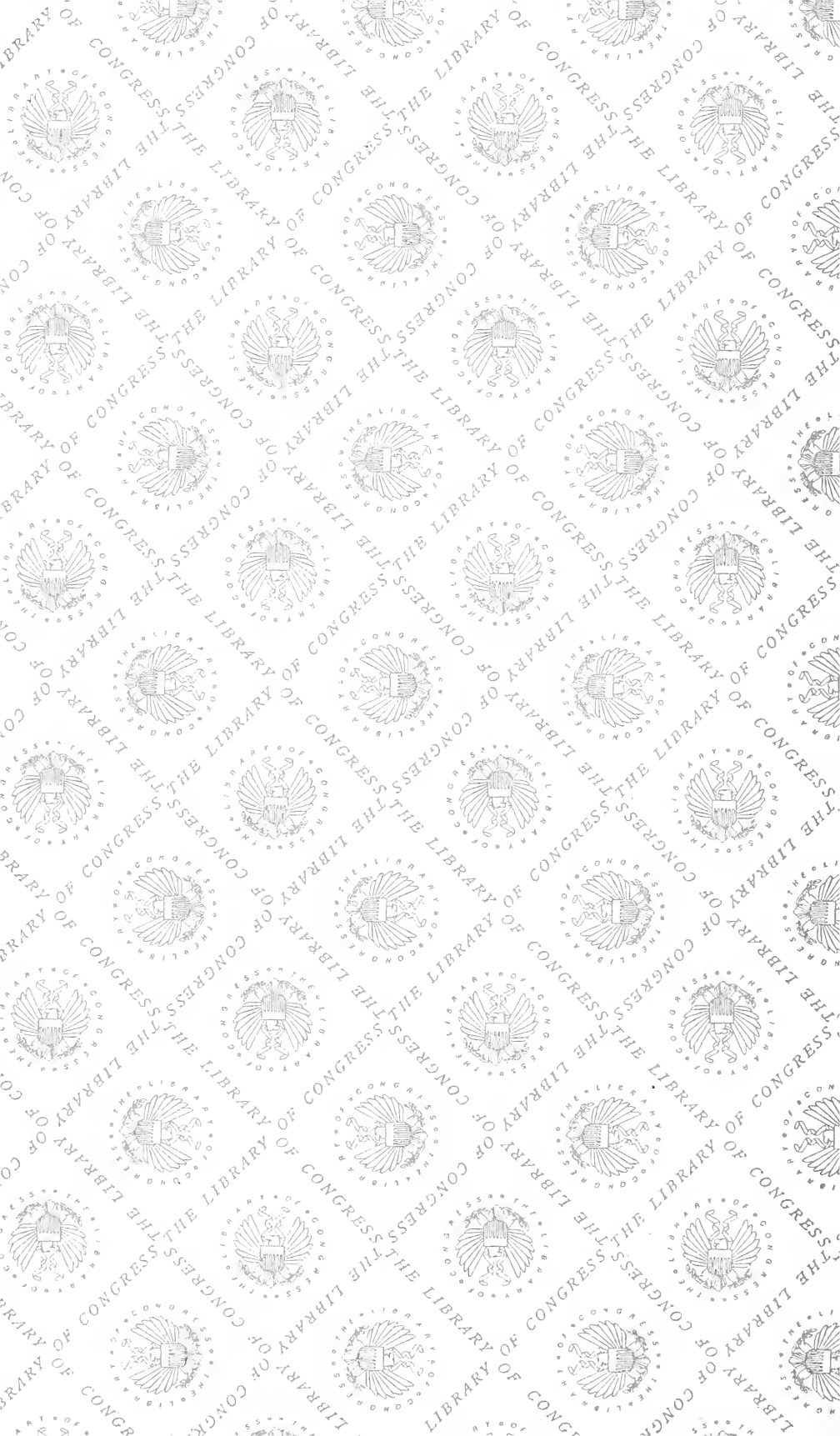
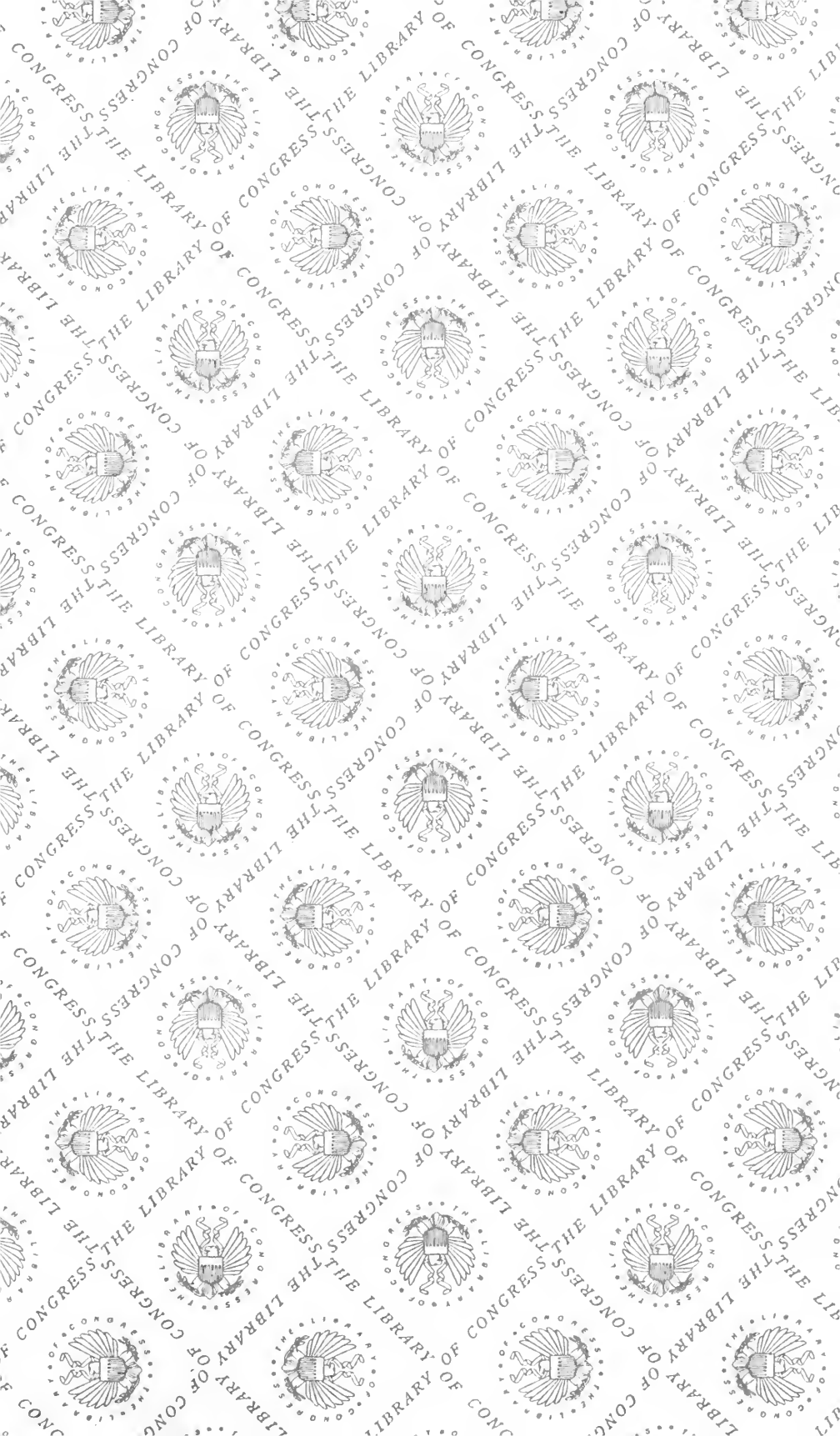


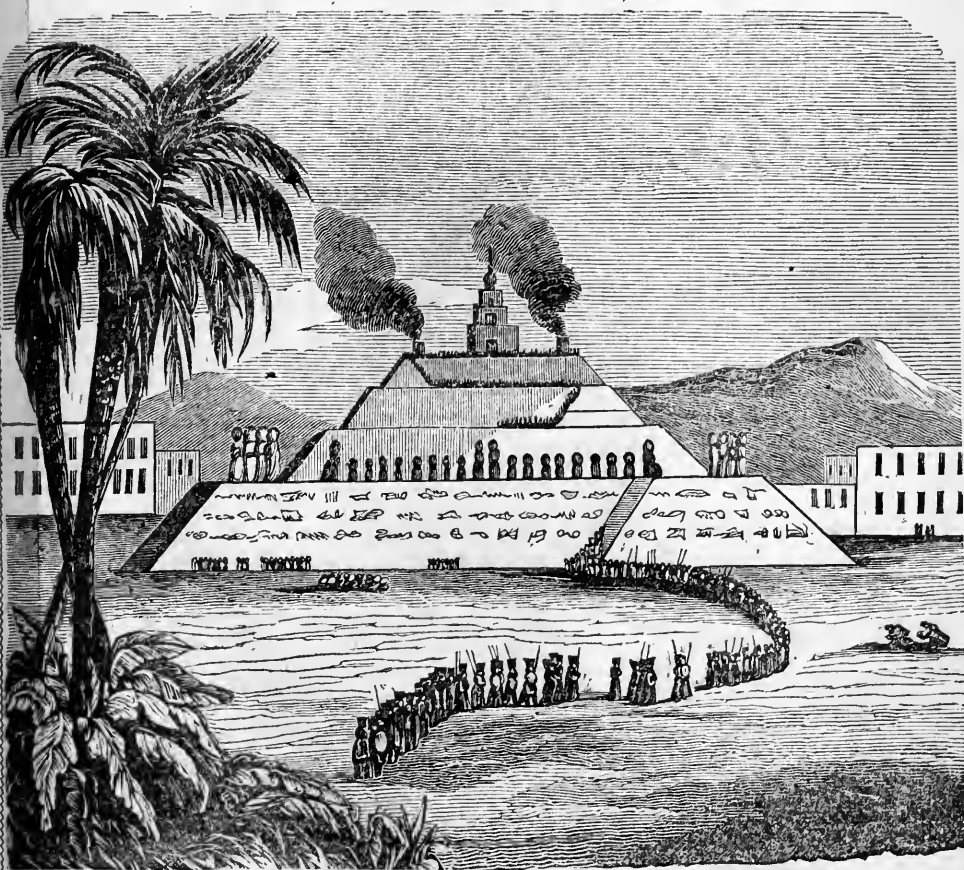
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GREGORY'S HISTORY OF MEXICO.

A HISTORY OF MEXICO FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE PRESENT; GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THE ANCIENT INHABITANTS; THE CONQUEST BY CORTEZ; WAR OF INDEPENDENCE; SUBSEQUENT REVOLUTIONS; SANTA ANNA AND OTHER MILITARY LEADERS; THE ARMY; POLITICAL CHANGES; TEXIAN REVOLUTION; CITY OF MEXICO; MEXICAN BEAUTIES; AMUSEMENTS; ANECDOTES AND INCIDENTS OF MEXICAN LIFE, &C. &C.



VIEW OF THE GREAT TEMPLE DEDICATED TO THE SUN,
DESTROYED BY CORTEZ IN 1521.

It was finished and dedicated in 1486. It was a place for worship and human sacrifice. Sixty thousand victims perished at its dedication, and every part of it was bathed in human blood. It occupied the centre of the city, now the Great Square. It was a triple pyramid, with a place for sacrifice on the top. It was surrounded by a stone wall eight feet thick, crowned with battlements and ornamented with figures in the form of serpents. The interior of the inclosure was paved with polished porphyry, and was spacious enough to contain 500 houses. The wall had four gates, and over each was a military arsenal. From the centre arose the great TEOCALLIS, or Temple. The great Cathedral now occupies its place. [See p. 14.]

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SUBSEQUENT REVOLUTIONS; SANTA ANNA AND
OTHER MILITARY LEADERS; THE ARMY;
GOVERNMENT; POLITICAL CHANGES; TEXIAN REVOLUTION;
GEOGRAPHICAL VIEW OF THE COUNTRY; MOUNTAINS, RIVERS,
SEAPORTS, CITY OF MEXICO, CLIMATE, SOIL, PRODUCTIONS,
EXHAUSTLESS MINES OF GOLD AND SILVER; POPULATION,
HETEROGENEOUS RACES; RELIGION, PRODIGIOUS WEALTH OF
THE CHURCHES; STATE OF SOCIETY, MEXICAN
BEAUTIES,
ETIQUETTE, AMUSEMENTS, GAMING, COCK-FIGHTS,
BULL-FIGHTS, ANECDOTES AND INCIDENTS
OF MEXICAN LIFE, &C.

BY SAMUEL GREGORY, A. M.



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PREFACE.

NEXT to the history of our own country, that of Mexico is becoming to us a subject of the greatest interest and importance. Though neighboring Republics, the intercourse between the two countries has been exceedingly limited, and until the commencement of the present war, but little more was known, by the community in general, respecting the past and present condition of Mexico than of China.

Some valuable works have been published, but the several authors have usually confined themselves to particular portions of Mexican history, so that a person would need to procure a small library to obtain a complete view of the whole. Having with some difficulty procured the different works on the subject, and consulted them for his own information, the writer thought that perhaps it might not be an unacceptable service to give a condensed and connected view of Mexican history, in a cheap form for general reading.

As a guide to those who wish to continue their researches, and who are not already acquainted with the sources of information, it may be well to name some of the works on this subject. There are good articles on the history and geography of the country, and its revolutions, in the large Encyclopedias, Edinburg, Britanica, Americana; in some of the volumes of the North American, Democratic, and other Reviews, and in McCulloch's Gazetteer—Humbolt's Researches—Robertson's History of America—Ward's Mexico—Poinsett's Notes—Prescott's History of the Conquest—Translation of the dispatches of Cortes, by Folsom—Thompson's Recollections of Mexico—Life in Mexico, by Madam Calderon—Mexico by Brantz Mayer—and the History of South America and Mexico, and their Revolutions, by John M. Niles, containing also a History of Texas and the Texian Revolution.

Whatever else may result from the present war with Mexico, it will at least make us better acquainted with the country. The vast barrier of savage region, which has hitherto separated us, has now been trod and retrod. The exploration of the country by our armies, and of the seas and ports by our navy, will be followed by immigration, and the introduction of the enterprise and improvements of the northern republic. Our vessels and steamboats will crowd her ports; commercial relations will create mutual interests; social intercourse will increase, and peace and friendship will succeed to the turmoil of war.

The little that has been known of Mexico has given a more unfavorable opinion of the country than a fuller knowledge of its history will warrant. We have heard of the revolutions, anarchy and blood-shed, of the depredations on our commerce, of the sanguinary character of Texian war, and have been taught to consider the Mexicans a nation of pirates and barbarians, without one redeeming quality, or one palliating circumstance for their condition or conduct. They have indeed faults, too many and too great to need exaggeration; they have also much that is praiseworthy, much that is noble in their character, which, like the gold in their mines, needs only to be purified from its baser ingredients, to make it captivate by its richness and splendor.

Boston, July 3, 1847.



HISTORY OF MEXICO.

CHAPTER I.

THE ANCIENT MEXICANS.

The Earliest Inhabitants of the Country. The Aztecs or Ancient Mexicans. Founding of the City of Mexico. Victorious Career of the Aztecs. Description of the City. Aqueducts, Ponds, Gardens, Menagerie, and Bird-house. 'The Halls of Montezuma,' Description of. Personal Appearance of the Emperor. Magnificence and Luxury of his Palace. Montezuma at Dinner. His Lords and Household. Temples of the Gods. Great Temple of Mexico. Dedication of the the Great Temple by sacrificing sixty thousand human victims to their War-god. One hundred and thirty-six thousand Skulls. Sacrificial Stone. Manner of Sacrificing Human Victims. Feasting on Human Flesh. Their Ideas of a Future State. Picture-writing. Mode of Recording Events. Arithmetic. Mode of Computing Time. Materials of Manuscripts. Calendar Stone. Knowledge of Astronomy. Edge-tools. Gold-smiths. Mode of Trading. Fairs. Itinerant Merchants. Military Weapons. Couriers, or Express-men. Remarks on the Civilization of the Ancient Mexicans.

At the time of the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, three centuries and a quarter ago, it was inhabited by several races of copper colored Indians, much like the aborigines of our own country, but far in advance of them in point of civilization. The first settlers of that country, of whom the traditions of the natives gave any account, were the Toltecs, a tribe that came from the northern regions of the Rocky mountains, and located themselves near the present city of Mexico, about the year 648.

They continued there for four centuries, when, it is said, being reduced by famine, pestilence and war, they mostly disappeared

from the country. This nation was acquainted with agriculture, some of the useful mechanic arts, and the working of metals. Some suppose that portions of this race, migrated southward, and that the celebrated ruins of Uxmal and Palenque, and other parts of Yucatan and Central America, are the remains of their cities.

Next followed, from the northwest, a ruder tribe, called Chichimecs, about 1160; and in the course of another century these were supplanted by more civilized races, among whom were the Aztecs, the ancient Mexicans. They came from a region north of the gulf of California, and entered the Mexican val-

ley in the last of the twelfth century, and after leading an unsettled life for about another hundred years, they at length, in 1325, founded their chief city, on an island in lake Tescuco. They were directed to the spot for the site of their capital, by seeing an eagle perched on a cactus or prickly pear, and having a serpent in his talons. This was considered a favorable omen, and the Aztecs called their city *Tonochtitlan*, a word significant of the incident alluded to. The city was sometimes called *Mexico*, in honor of their war-god *Mexitli*.

The Spaniards not only adopted this latter name of the Aztec city, but as if indicative of the fact that their race is engrafted upon that of the natives, they have adopted the device of the eagle and cactus as the arms of their republic.

The Aztecs, though at first possessing but a group of islands in lake Tescuco, soon by superior discipline and military prowess began to extend their limits, subjecting one nation after another, and under Montezuma, the first, the greatest of their sovereigns, they had, by the middle of the fifteenth century, extended their dominion to the gulf of Mexico; and before the arrival of the Spaniards, not two hundred years from the founding of the city, the Aztec sway was acknowledged from the gulf to the Pacific, and on the south to the bay of Honduras.

The imperial city was enriched by the spoils of conquest, and the annual tribute of conquered nations made it the queen of the lakes, and, as it has been called, the Venice of the Western World.

But many of the tributary States yielded only an unwilling obedience, and the warlike little republic of *Tlascala*, within seventy miles to the East, had maintained its independence against the formidable power of the Mexican arms. Montezuma, the second, who filled the throne at the time of the invasion by the Spaniards, lived in great pomp and splendor; his immense revenues were expended in the magnificent equipage of his

court, in adorning his capital, and in keeping up large armies to maintain his authority over the conquered nations. The state of things was very favorable to Cortes, as many of the disaffected chiefs were ready to unite their arms with his against the terrible Montezuma.

The wonder and admiration of the Spaniards, as they approached the city and the 'Halls of the Montezumas,' are thus depicted by Bernal Diaz, a soldier in the army of Cortes: 'When we beheld the number of populous towns upon the water and main land, the broad causeways which ran straight and level over the water to the city, and the great towers and temples of stone, which seemed to rise out of the water, we could compare it to nothing but the enchanted scenes we had read of in *Amadis de Gaul*.—To many of us it appeared doubtful whether we were asleep or awake. Nor is the manner in which I express myself to be wondered at, for it must be considered that never yet did man see, hear, or dream of anything equal to the spectacle which appeared to our eyes that day. I thought within myself that this was the garden of the world.

When we came near certain towers, close to the city, Montezuma, who was there, quitted his palanquin, and was borne in the arms of princes, under a canopy of the richest materials, ornamented with green feathers, gold and precious stones, that hung down in the manner of a fringe. He was most richly dressed, and wore buskins of pure gold, studded with jewels. The people spread mantles on the ground lest his feet should touch it, and all who attended him, except the four princes, kept their eyes fixed on the earth, not daring to look him in the face.

Who could count the multitudes of men, women and children that thronged the streets, the canals, the terraces, and the house tops that day? We were astonished at the number of canoes passing to and from the main land, loaded with provisions and merchandise; and we could now perceive that in this

great city, and all the others in the neighborhood that were built in the water, the houses stood separate from each other, communicating by draw bridges and boats, and that they were built with terraced roofs. We saw also the temples and oratories of the adjacent cities, built in the form of towers and castles, and others on the causeway, all painted white and wonderfully brilliant. The noise and bustle of the market-place could be heard almost a league off; and those of us who had been at Rome and Constantinople, said, that for convenience, regularity and population, they had never seen the like.'

The city was supplied with water by an aqueduct of masonry, leading from Chapultepec, two miles distant. There were artificial ponds for fish; and, connected with the palace of Montezuma, was a garden filled with shrubs and plants of every scent, and flowers of every hue; an extensive menagerie of wild beasts, collected from the mountain regions and burning plains of his broad dominions; an aviary, filled with the feathered race of unnumbered variety of note and plume, which abound in the wonderfully varied climate of that country.

It must not, however, be inferred from all this, that the Indian capital bore a very close resemblance to the cities built by enlightened nations. The houses of the poorer classes were built of reeds and mud, but arranged along the borders of the canals so as to give them a pretty appearance. The palace of the emperor and the dwellings of the chiefs and nobles, were constructed of stone and mortar, with roofs of cedar or other wood.— They were generally but one story high, but some of them covered a large space of ground.

The far famed 'Halls of the Montezumas,' as they first appeared to the wondering eyes of the Spaniards, are thus described in Prescott's History of the Conquest. 'On the following morning, the general requested permission to return the emperor's visit by waiting on him in his palace. This was readily granted, and Montezuma sent his officers to

conduct the Spaniards to his presence. Cortes dressed himself in his richest habit, and left the quarters attended by Alvarado, Sandoval, Velasques, and Ordaz, together with five or six of the common file.

The royal habitation was at no great distance. It stood on the ground to the south-west of the cathedral, since covered in part by the *Casa del Estado*, the palace of the dukes of Monteleone, the descendants of Cortes. It was a vast, irregular pile of low stone buildings, like that garrisoned by the Spaniards. So spacious indeed, that, as one of the conquerors assures us, although he had visited it more than once for the express purpose, he had been too much fatigued each time by wandering through the apartments, ever to see the whole of it. It was built of the red porous stone of the country, *tetzontli*, was ornamented with marble, and on the facade over the principal entrance were sculptured the arms or device of Montezuma, an eagle bearing an ocelot in his talons.

In the courts through which the Spaniards passed, fountains of crystal water were playing, fed from the copious reservoir on the distant hill of Chapultepec, and supplying in their turn more than a hundred baths in the interior of the palace. Crowds of Aztec nobles were sauntering up and down in these squares, and in the outer halls, loitering away their hours in attendance on the court.

The apartments were of immense size, though not lofty. The ceilings were of various sorts of odoriferous wood ingeniously carved; the floors covered with mats of the palm leaf. The walls were hung with cotton richly stained, with skins of wild animals, or gorgeous draperies of feather-work wrought in imitation of birds, insects, and flowers, with the nice art and glowing radiance of colors that might compare with the tapestries of Flanders. Clouds of incense rolled up from censers, and diffused intoxicating odors through the apartments. The Spaniards might well have fancied themselves in the voluptuous precincts of an Eastern ba-

rem, instead of treading the halls of a wild, barbaric chief in the Western world.'

As to the personal appearance of Montezuma, he is represented as being at that time, about forty years of age, tall, thin, and well formed, his hair black and straight, and not very long; beard thin, and complexion lighter than usual in the copper colored race, a serious though not melancholy cast of countenance; there was dignity in his movements, and a union of gentleness and authority in his whole demeanor.

The following account of Montezuma and the style of his court is given by the old soldier, Bernal Diaz, as quoted by Brantz Mayer :

'The great Montezuma was, at this time, aged about forty years, of good stature, well proportioned, and thin. His complexion was much fairer than that of the Indians; he wore his hair short, just covering his ears, with very little beard, well arranged, thin and black. His face was rather long, with a pleasant mien and good eyes; gravity and good humor were blended together when he spoke. He was very delicate and cleanly in his person, bathing himself every evening—He had a number of mistresses of the first families, and two princesses, his lawful wives; when he visited them, it was with such secrecy that none could know it except his own servants. He was clear of all suspicions of unnatural vices. The clothes which he wore one day he did not put on for four days after.

He had set two hundred of his nobility as a guard in apartments adjoining his own. Of these only certain persons could speak to him, and when they went to wait upon him, they took off their rich mantles and put on others of less ornament, but clean. They entered his apartments barefooted, their eyes fixed on the ground, and making three inclinations of the body as they approached him. In addressing the king they said, "Lord—my lord—great lord!" When they had finished he dismissed them with a few words, and

they retired with their faces towards him and their eyes fixed on the ground. I also observed, that when great men came from a distance about business, they entered his palace barefooted, and in plain habit; and also, that they did not enter the gate directly, but took a circuit in going towards it.

His cooks had upward of thirty different ways of dressing meats, and they had earthen vessels so contrived as to keep them constantly hot. For the table of Montezuma himself, about three hundred dishes were dressed, and for his guards about a thousand. Before dinner, Montezuma would sometimes go out and inspect the preparations, and his officers would point out to him which were the best, and explain of what birds and flesh they were composed; and of those he would eat. But this was more for amusement than any thing else.

It is said, that at times the flesh of young children was dressed for him; but the ordinary meats were domestic fowls, pheasants, geese, partridges, quails, venison, Indian hogs, pigeons, hares and rabbits, with many other animals and birds peculiar to the country. This is certain—that after Cortes had spoken to him relative to the dressing of human flesh, it was not practiced in his palace. At his meals, in the cold weather, a number of torches of the bark of a wood which makes no smoke, and has an aromatic smell, were lighted; and, that they should not throw too much heat, screens ornamented with gold and painted with figures of idols, were placed before them.

Montezuma was seated on a low throne or chair, at a table proportioned to the height of his seat. The table was covered with white cloths and napkins, and four beautiful women presented him with water for his hands, in vessels which they call *xicales*, with other vessels under them, like plates to catch the water. They also presented him with towels.

Then two other women brought small cakes of bread, and when the king began to

eat, a large screen of gilded wood was placed before him, so that during that period people should not behold him. The women having retired to a little distance, four ancient lords stood by the throne, to whom Montezuma, from time to time, spoke or addressed questions, and as a mark of peculiar favor, gave to each of them a plate of that which he was eating. I was told that these old lords, who were his near relations, were also counsellors and judges. The plates which Montezuma presented to them they received with high respect, eating what was on them without taking their eyes off the ground. He was served in earthenware of Cholula, red and black. While the king was at the table, no one of his guards in the vicinity of his apartment dared, for their lives, make any noise. Fruit of all kinds produced in the country, was laid before him; he ate very little; but from time to time a liquor prepared from cocoa, and of a stimulative quality, as we were told, was presented to him in golden cups.—We could not at that time see whether he drank it or not; but I observed a number of jars, above fifty, brought in filled with foaming chocolate, of which he took some that the women presented him.

At different intervals during the time of dinner, there entered certain Indians, hump-backed, very deformed and ugly, who played tricks of buffoonery; and others who, they said were jesters. There was also a company of singers and dancers, who afforded Montezuma much entertainment. To these he ordered the vases of chocolate to be distributed. The four females then took away the cloths, and again with much respect presented him with water to wash his hands, during which time Montezuma conferred with the four old noblemen formerly mentioned, after which they took their leave with many ceremonies.

One thing I forgot (and no wonder) to mention in its place, and that is, that during the time that Montezuma was at dinner, two very beautiful women were busily employed

making small cakes with eggs and other things mixed therein. These were delicately white, and when made, they presented them to him on plates covered with napkins. Also another kind of bread was brought to him in long loaves, and plates of cakes resembling wafers.

After he had dined they presented him with three little canes, highly ornamented, containing liquid-amber, mixed with an herb they call *tobacco*; and when he had sufficiently viewed and heard the singers, dancers, and buffoons, he took a little of the smoke of one of these canes, and then laid himself down to sleep.

The meal of the monarch ended, all his guards and domestics sat down to dinner, and as near as I could judge, above a thousand plates of these eatables that I have mentioned, were laid before them, with vessels of foaming chocolate and fruit in immense quantity. For his women, and various inferior servants, his establishment was of a prodigious expense; and we were astonished, amid such a profusion, at the vast regularity that prevailed. His chief steward was, at this time, a prince named Tapica, who kept the accounts of Montezuma's rents, in books which occupied an entire house.

Montezuma had two buildings filled with every kind of arms, richly ornamented with gold and jewels, such as shields, large and small clubs like two handed swords, and lances much longer than ours, with blades six feet in length, so strong that if they fix in a shield they do not break; and sharp enough to use as razors.

There were also an immense quantity of bows and arrows, and darts, together with slings, and shields which roll up into a small compass, and in action are let fall, and thereby cover the whole body. He had also much defensive armor of quilted cotton, ornamented with feathers in different devices, and casques for the head, made of wood and bone, with plumes of feathers, and many other articles too tedious to mention.

The most remarkable structures in the ancient Mexican cities were their temples, called *teocallis* or houses of God. They were very numerous, often several hundred, large and small, in a single city.

The great temple of Mexico, stood in the central part of the city, it was surrounded by a wall eight feet high, built of stone and lime, covered with figures of serpents. The area within this inclosure was so vast, that Cortes asserted that five hundred houses might have been built in it. The wall had four gates, fronting the four cardinal points, and over each portal was an arsenal filled with the weapons of war. The space within was paved with polished stone, so smooth that the horses of the Spaniards could not move over it without slipping. (*See Engraving.*)

In the centre of this inclosure rose the great *Teocalli*, built in the form of a pyramid, 320 feet square at the base, and 120 feet high. It was made of earth, encased with hewn stone; had five stories, each receding so as to be smaller than the one below, thus leaving a walk five or six feet wide around the whole, on the top of each story. A flight of stairs, at one corner, led to the first walk, which must be traversed around the pyramid, where a second flight directly over the first, led to another story, and so on till the top was reached. So that the religious processions had to pass four times round the building, before arriving at the broad, paved platform on the summit.

Upon this platform arose two towers, containing altars, on which burned the undying fires, like the Vestal flames in ancient Rome. Here too were the inner sanctuaries, containing the images of gods; and the dreadful stone of sacrifice, on which were offered human victims to their horrid deities; and a huge drum made of serpents' skins, which was struck only on extraordinary occasions, when its doleful sounds could be heard for many a mile around.

They had many deities, some, of a milder nature, were worshipped by songs and dan-

ces and the offerings of fruits and flowers.—The worship of others consisted of the most bloody and abominable rites.

The most important of their deities, was *Mexitli*, or the god of war. He was the guardian power that directed them in their wanderings, conducted them to the spot for founding their city, and made them victorious over their enemies. Thousands and tens of thousands of their prisoners of war were offered on his altars; hence the Aztecs never killed their enemies if they could take them captive.

The image of this 'Mexican Mars' was of gigantic size, with a hideous, distorted countenance. In his right hand was a bow, and in his left a bunch of golden arrows. His waist was encircled by the folds of a golden serpent, and around his neck was a chain of gold and silver hearts, indicating the kind of sacrifice with which he was most delighted.

The great temple was completed and dedicated in the reign of Ahuitzotl, the eighth king of Mexico and predecessor of Montezuma. For its dedication, which took place in 1486, the prisoners taken in all parts of the empire had been reserved for many years.—They were ranged in files of nearly two miles in length; the ceremony occupied several days, and *sixty thousand* captives are said to have been sacrificed to the terrible war-god. The number seems incredible, but the skulls of their victims were preserved in buildings for the purpose, and the Spaniards counted one hundred and thirty-six thousand of these ghastly trophies in one of these edifices; so that the estimate, that twenty thousand human victims were sacrificed annually in the country, comes within the bounds of probability.

The manner of conducting the sacrifice was this. The victim was arrayed in the insignia of the god to whom he was to be offered. The solemn procession wound up the sides of the temple. 'On the summit,' says the historian of the Conquest, 'he was received by six priests, whose long and matted

locks flowed disorderly over their sable robes, covered with hieroglyphic scrolls of mystic import. They led him to the sacrificial stone, a huge block of jasper, with its upper surface somewhat convex. On this the prisoner was stretched. Five priests secured his head and limbs; while a sixth clad in a scarlet mantle, emblematic of his bloody office, dexterously opened the breast of the wretched victim with a sharp razor of itztli,—a volcanic substance hard as flint,—and, inserting his hand in the wound, tore out the palpitating heart. The minister of death first holding this up towards the sun, an object of worship throughout Anahuac, cast it at the feet of the deity to whom the temple was devoted, while the multitudes below prostrated themselves in humble adoration.'

More revolting still, the body was given to the warrior who had taken the captive in battle, and sometimes served up as an entertainment, and eaten by himself and friends. The remains were burned or given to the wild beasts in the royal menagerie. Thus, with all their claims to civilization and refinement, the ancient Mexicans were stained by a bloody system of religion and a cannibalism more shocking than that of the most degraded barbarians.

Their religious system was relieved by more mild and agreeable features. They had some conception of an invisible, incorporeal, and omnipresent God, the Creator and Lord of the universe. 'They imagined,' says Prescott, 'three separate states of existence in the future life. The wicked—comprehending the greater part of mankind—were to expiate their sins in a place of everlasting darkness. Another class—with no other merit than that of having died of certain diseases, capriciously selected—were to enjoy a negative existence of indolent contentment. The highest place was reserved, as in most warlike nations, for the heroes who fell in battle or in sacrifice. They passed at once into the presence of the sun, whom they accompanied with songs and choral dances, in

his bright progress through the heavens; and, after some years, their spirits went to animate the clouds and singing birds of beautiful plumage, and to rove amidst the rich blossoms and odors of the gardens of Paradise. Such was the heaven of the Aztecs; more refined in its character than that of the more polished pagan, whose elysium reflected only the martial sports or sensual gratifications of this life. In the destiny they assign to the wicked, we discern similar traces of refinement; since the abandonment of all physical torture forms a striking contrast to the schemes of suffering so ingeniously devised by the fancies of the most enlightened nations. In all this, so contrary to the natural suggestions of the ferocious Aztec, we see the evidence of a higher civilization inherited from their predecessors in the land.'

The Mexicans had no alphabet or written language, but used a symbolical or picture-writing, which consisted in delineating objects and events by rude paintings or outline sketches. When the envoys from Montezuma met the Spaniards on their arrival, one of the attendants was observed with his pencil, sketching on a sort of canvas; and on examining his work, it was found to be a delineation of the Spaniards, their dress, arms, horses, &c., designed to convey to Montezuma the appearance of his unwelcome visitors. 'They were not,' says Dr. Robertson, 'acquainted with any other mode of recording transactions than that of delineating the objects which they wished to represent. But they could exhibit a complex series of events in progressive order, and describe, by a proper disposition of figures, the occurrences of a king's reign from his accession to his death; the progress of an infant's education from its birth until it attained to the years of maturity; the different recompenses and marks of distinction conferred upon warriors, in proportion to the exploits which they had performed.

Some singular specimens of this picture-

writing have been preserved, which are justly considered as the most curious monuments of art brought from the New World. The most valuable of these was published by Purchas in sixty-six plates. It is divided into three parts. The first contains the history of the Mexican empire under its ten monarchs. The second is a tribute roll, representing what each conquered town paid into the royal treasury. The third is a code of their institutions, domestic, political and military. Another specimen of Mexican painting has been published in thirty-two plates, by the present archbishop of Toledo. To both is annexed a full explanation of what the figures were intended to represent, which was obtained by the Spaniards from Indians well acquainted with their own arts. The style of painting in all these is the same. They represent *things* not *words*. They exhibit images to the eye, not ideas to the understanding. They may therefore be considered as the earliest and most imperfect essay of men in their progress towards discovering the art of writing.

The defects in this mode of recording transactions must have been early felt. To paint every occurrence was from its nature a very tedious operation; and as affairs became more complicated, and events multiplied in any society, its annals must have swelled to an enormous bulk. Besides this, no objects could be delineated but those of sense; the conceptions of the mind had no corporeal form; and as long as picture-writing could not convey an idea of these, it must have been a very imperfect art.

It is only in one instance, the notation of numbers, that we discern any attempt to exhibit ideas which had no corporeal form. The Mexican painters had invented artificial marks, or *signs of convention* for this purpose. By means of these they computed the years of their kings' reigns, as well as the amount of tribute to be paid into the royal treasury. The figure of a circle represented a unit; and in small numbers the computation was

made by repeating it. Large numbers were expressed by a peculiar mark; and they had such as denoted all integral numbers, from twenty to eight thousand. The short duration of their empire prevented the Mexicans from advancing further in that long course which conducts men from the labor of delineating real objects, to the simplicity and ease of alphabetic writing. Their records, notwithstanding some dawn of such ideas as might have led to a more perfect style, can be considered as little more than a species of picture writing so far improved as to mark their superiority over the savage tribes of America; but still so defective as to prove that they had not proceeded far beyond the first stage in that progress which must be completed before any people can be ranked among polished nations.

Their mode of computing time may be considered as a more decisive evidence of their progress in improvement. They divided their year into eighteen months of twenty days; amounting in all to three hundred and sixty. But as they observed that the course of the sun was not completed in that time, they added five days to the year. These which were properly intercalary days, they termed *supernumerary* or *waste*; and as they did not belong to any month, no work was done, and no sacred rite performed on them; they were devoted wholly to festivity and pastime. This near approach to philosophical accuracy is a remarkable proof that the Mexicans had bestowed some attention upon inquiries and speculations to which men in a very rude state never turn their thoughts.

The material for their manuscripts was cotton cloth, parchment of skins and a kind of paper made of the bark of the aloe, or *maguey*. Their rude records, their songs and hymns, and the oral instruction imparted to the young, perpetuated their history and the exploits of their warriors.

Agriculture was their chief means of subsistence. In this their skill corresponded with their other improvements. Unlike the

less cultivated tribes of the North, instead of living the roving life of hunters, and depending upon the uncertain product of the wood and the stream, they collected into cities and villages, and had gardens, reared the banana, cocoa plant, and fields of Indian corn. Nor did they, like the red man of our forests and some more civilized nations, oblige their women to perform the labors of the field; though they assisted in some of the lighter employments, as gathering fruits and husking the corn.

They had no beasts of draught or of burden, or any of the more useful domestic animals; having gone no farther than to tame and rear a sort of turkey, ducks, a small species of dogs and rabbits. Though without the aid of animal power, they, by mechanical skill and some sort of machinery, contrived to rear immense structures, and move huge blocks of stone. The great *Calendar stone*, estimated to have weighed fifty tons when taken from the quarry, was brought to the city from the mountains, several leagues distant, over a broken country and streams of water.

This *Calendar stone*, now to be seen in one of the walls of the Cathedral, is an immense circular mass of basalt, eleven feet eight inches in diameter, covered with carved work, astronomical figures and a graduated scale for marking the progress of the sun through the heavens. It was a sort of dial by which they determined the hours of the day, and also the period of the solstices, and the equinoxes. They regulated their festivals by the heavenly bodies, understood the cause of eclipses, and, considering their other improvements, they showed a wonderful knowledge of astronomical science.

The Mexicans were unacquainted with the use of iron, but as a substitute they made axes and other edged tools, of a composition of copper and tin, so tempered as to cut wood and stone.

They obtained silver and gold from mines, but principally from the washings of sand,

not knowing much of the chemical processes of extracting the metal from the ore. From the gold and silver they made beautiful ornaments, images, birds and other curiosities, and vases covered with ingenious devices, skillfully wrought with their engraving tools; in which art it is said they excelled the Spanish silver-smiths themselves. As the precious metals were not with them, the standard of property and wealth, by being coined into money and used as a circulating medium, so they did not set the same value on them as did the greedy Spaniards, who for their golden god sacrificed more hecatombs of the poor natives, than did the latter in the more commendable rights of religion.

There was no general currency among the Mexicans, their trading being mostly done by exchange and barter; tribute being paid in the produce of the soil, articles of manufacture, gold dust and other commodities. Slaves too were articles of traffic, for we cannot claim, that the Godless and blood stained Aztecs should be in advance of the model and Christian Republic of the nineteenth century.

There were no shops for trade, but a fair was held every fifth day in the capital, when the unnumbered articles of merchandise were brought together, and sales and exchanges effected. There was also a class of itinerant merchants, who went out in companies, laden with jewelry, costly fabrics and *feather-work*—beautiful embroidery, wrought with feathers of varied and brilliant hues. With these they traversed the country and traded; and woe betide the city or town that injured or insulted them, for they were commissioned by the Emperor, and often acted as his spies, to report the state of affairs in his provinces.

The military weapons of the Mexicans were bows and arrows, slings, darts javelins and spears, with heads of stone or copper; and a formidable sort of sword, being a heavy staff with transverse blades of obsidian, (a black glassy stone,) passing through it at

regular distances. They also had shields and helmets and a dress of quilted cotton as a defence against the light missiles of their enemies.

They had an admirable arrangement for communication between the centre and the distant parts of the empire, excelling anything of the kind that existed in Europe at the time. This was a system of couriers, swift footed runners, stationed five or six miles apart, in lines to the remotest borders of the country. When anything important occurred, in peace or in war, the oral information or the pictured dispatches were transmitted from one courier to another and so on to the capital, with incredible celerity. Rare fruits and articles of luxury, for the royal household, were forwarded in the same way, by these express men; and it is said that fish, fresh and nice, were smoking on the Emperor's table, within twenty-four hours after they were caught in the Mexican gulf, two hundred miles distant. And before the Spaniards had come to anchor, the news of their coasting northward was borne to the ears of Montezuma. In this manner the Emperor was immediately made acquainted with everything that was transpiring in his extensive dominions.

In contemplating the character of the ancient Mexicans, and the degree and quality

of their civilization, one is struck with the incongruities and contradictions that are presented. Their system of laws, and police regulations, the education of their youth, their knowledge of architecture, of astronomy and the calculation of time, their manufactures, agriculture, gardens, fountains, domestic customs, and the splendid and luxurious style of living, indicate a high degree of advancement in the arts and comforts of civilized life. While their incessant and ferocious wars, the merciless treatment of prisoners and their bloody system of religion, mark them as a race of fierce barbarians. The fact however that they had reduced their religion to a regular *system*, and had their temples, altars and idols, their priests, victims and festivals, shows a kind of superiority over the simpler worship of the wandering tribes.

To what degree of civilization and refinement they would have arrived, had America remained undiscovered, it is impossible to conjecture. But, judging from the progress they had made in two hundred years from the rude beginnings of their city, it seems probable that in the progress of time, they would have attained a degree of knowledge and refinement equal to that of the most polished nations who have not enjoyed the light of revelation and the benign influence of christianity.

CHAPTER II.

CONQUEST BY CORTES.

Discovery of Mexico. Expedition against it under Cortes. Lands at St. Juan de Ulua. Reception by the Natives. They offer Rich Presents. Founding of Vera Cruz. Cortes Destroys his Ships—Marches for Mexico—Passes Jalapa. Battles and Alliance with the Tlascalans. Slaughter of six thousand Inhabitants of Cholula. Approach of the Spaniards to the Capital. Magnificent Reception by the Emperor, Montezuma.—Cortes seizes the Emperor in his Palace and governs the Empire in his name. Governor of Cuba sends an Expedition against Cortes. Mexicans rise upon the Spaniards in the City. Montezuma Killed. Retreat and Dreadful Slaughter of the Spaniards.—Great Battle of Otumba. Cortes receives Reinforcements—Returns to Mexico—Builds Vessels. Battle on the Lake. Siege of the City. Terrible Conflicts. Forty Spaniards Taken and Sacrificed to the Gods. The Emperor Guatimozin taken Captive. Surrender of the City. Torture of Guatimozin to make him discover his Treasures. Cortes Rebuilds Mexico. Revolt of the Mexicans. Guatimozin Hung, and four hundred and sixty Chiefs Burned alive. Subsequent Career and Death of Cortes.

CONSIDERING the extent of the country, the number, the intelligence, and the warlike character of the population, the conquest of Mexico by Cortes and his band of adventurers, is one of the most remarkable military achievements recorded in history.

Twenty-five years had passed away since the discovery of the New World by Columbus. Hispaniola, Cuba, and some of the other West India islands had been settled by the Spaniards, and they now began to turn their attention westward to the continent. In 1518, Don Diego Velasques, governor of Cuba, fitted out a small expedition of discovery, under Juan de Grijalva. He sailed along the coasts of Yucatan and the winding shores of the gulf of Mexico, putting in at different places to traffic with

the Indians, and at length landed at an island which he called *Los Sacrificios*, from seeing here, for the first time, the bloody remains of human sacrifices. He touched at another small island, which he named St. Juan de Ulua; and coasting northward as far as the river Tampico, the fleet returned to Cuba.

Grijalva gave a glowing description of the country he had seen, which, from the beauty and verdure of its indented shores, and the lovely appearance of its villages, with the general applause of the sailors, he had called *New Spain*. And by this name the country was known while it remained a Spanish colony. He also carried back gold, silver, ornaments and other articles which he had obtained by his traffic with the natives.

Velasques, prompted by ambition and avarice, immediately commenced fitting out a larger expedition to take possession of the country, and plant colonies. At this time, when the spirit of adventure was the life of the Spaniard, there were enough to embark in any enterprise, however hazardous, provided it offered gold and glory.

Velasques was anxious to secure the honor which would attend the enterprise if successful, yet being unwilling to endure the hardships, or conscious of his want of the courage and qualifications to command, he was much perplexed to select a leader adapted to his purposes. For the success of the expedition, it was essential that it should be conducted by a person of boldness and energy, and possessing all the requisite abilities to command; but to answer the views of Velasques, the person must at the same time be so tame and obsequious, as to remain the humble servant of his employer. Qualities rarely united in the same character.

While Velasques was thus anxiously deliberating, two of his chief officers in the government recommended to him Fernando Cortes, as a suitable person to invest with the command of the armament. Fortunately for his country, though not for himself, Velasques followed their advice and appointed Cortes, thinking him well qualified for the station, though of too humble condition and fortune, to aspire at independence.

Cortes was at this time about thirty-three years of age. He had been a wild youth; was destined by his parents to the study of law, and early sent to the university of Salamanca, where he obtained the beginning of an education, but soon gave up the pursuit of knowledge for the active sports and military exercises which were better adapted to his inclinations. He came out to Hispaniola in the year 1504, and was immediately employed by Ovando his kinsman, and governor of the island, in several lucrative and honorable stations. He accompanied Ve-

lasques in his expedition to Cuba in 1511, and distinguished himself in subjugating the island, for which he received a share of the lands and the Indians.

Cortes received his commission with becoming gratitude to the governor, assumed the ensigns of command, and erected a standard before his own house. He endeavored to influence his friends to engage in the service, and used his utmost exertions to hasten the preparations for sailing; employing all of his funds and raising what he could on the security of his lands and property, to obtain supplies and needful equipments for his troops. He received his commission October 23d, and on the 18th of November, 1518, he put out from St. Jago de Cuba, and proceeded to Trinidad, a settlement on the same side of the island of Cuba, where he increased his supplies and the number of his men. The extraordinary energy and activity Cortes displayed in the preparations, had begun to excite the suspicions of Velasques even before the fleet left St. Jago; but now the busy malice of Cortes' enemies, and the jealous disposition of Velasques had heightened the suspicions of the governor to such a degree, that he sent an order to Verdugo the chief magistrate at Trinidad, to deprive Cortes of his commission. But he had already gained the esteem and confidence of his soldiers, and Verdugo did not think it prudent to molest him.

Cortes now sailed to Havana, to complete the supply of his vessels and the number of his troops. Velasques irritated at the failure of the attempt to intercept him, and feeling that he would now have good reason to throw off his allegiance at the first favorable opportunity, sent a person in whom he could confide, with peremptory orders to Pedro Barba, his lieutenant governor at Havana, to arrest Cortes and send him under a strong guard to St. Jago, and to countermand the sailing of the fleet. Cortes having been informed of what was transpiring, addressed his men

stating the design of the governor, and exposing his illiberal conduct in wishing to deprive him of his command, and to delay the sailing of the armament. Many of the officers and men had expended all their fortunes in preparing for the voyage, and were impatient to depart; and with one voice they expressed their surprise and indignation at the unreasonable course of Velasques, and besought Cortez not to abandon the post that had been assigned him, nor deprive them of a leader in whom they had such confidence; and declared they would shed the last drop of their blood to maintain his authority.—Cortez, of course, was not reluctant to comply with their wishes, and pledged himself never to abandon soldiers who were thus attached to him, and promised immediately to lead them to those golden lands where were centered their hopes and expectations.—Shouts of applause answered this declaration, and imprecations against any who should dare to molest their general.

The fleet, which was now ready to sail, consisted of eleven vessels; the largest of a hundred tons, three of seventy or eighty, and the rest small open barks. The men were six hundred and seventeen in number, five hundred and eight soldiers, a hundred and nine seamen and artificers. Fire-arms were not the most numerous weapons in use at that time, even among the nations of Europe; and only thirteen of the men had muskets, thirty-two cross-bows, the rest swords and spears. They had only sixteen horses and fourteen small field-pieces. With this small and poorly equipped force Cortez set sail, on the tenth of February, 1519, to attempt the conquest of a populous and powerful nation, governed by a monarch whose dominions were more extensive than all the kingdoms subject to the Spanish crown. Astonishing as it may appear, the spirit of conquest and plunder, which animated the Spanish adventurers in the New World, was blended with religious enthusiasm; and a large cross was displayed upon their standards, with this inscription,

‘Let us follow the cross, for under this sign we shall conquer.’

The fleet touched at the different places visited by Grijalva, and continued along the coast till it came to anchor at the island of St. Juan de Ulna. Here a large canoe filled with the natives, two of whom appeared to be persons of distinction, approached the vessels in a friendly manner. They came on board without any signs of fear or distrust, and addressed Cortez in a language unknown to his interpreter, Aguilar, a Spaniard who understood the language of the tribes farther South, having been eight years a captive among them. Cortez perceived the difficulties under which he must labor, if able to communicate with the Indians by signs only. Fortunately an Indian woman whom the Spaniards had brought from Tobasco, understood the Mexican language, which she readily translated into her own, with which Aguilar was acquainted; thus by means of a double interpretation, Cortez was enabled to converse with the Mexicans. This young woman was named by the Spaniards, Donna Marina; she remained true to the people who had adopted her, soon began to understand their language, and performed a most important service as interpreter throughout the war of the conquest.

Cortez now learned that the two chief persons were deputies from the two officers who governed the province by the authority of a great monarch, whom they called Montezuma, and that they were sent to inquire what were his intentions in visiting their coasts, and to offer him any assistance he might need in order to continue his voyage. Cortez in a respectful manner replied, that he had come with the most friendly intentions, and on matters of great importance to their sovereign and his country, as he would more fully explain in person to the governors.

The next morning, without waiting for an answer, Cortez landed his troops; and having chosen proper ground, they began to erect

huts, the natives assisting them with great alacrity, little aware that they were cherishing the plunderers of their country. During the day Teutile and Pilpatoe, the governors of the province, entered the camp with a numerous retinue, and were received by the Spaniards with the respect and attention due to the ministers of a great monarch. Cortez informed them that he had come as an ambassador from Don Carlos, king of Castile, the greatest monarch of the East; and that the object of his mission was of such vast importance, that he could communicate it to none but to their sovereign Montezuma himself, and required them to conduct him immediately to the presence of the emperor.

The Mexican chiefs were surprised at this bold request, and after endeavoring to conciliate Cortez by a gift of rich presents, they attempted to dissuade him from his proposition, which they knew Montezuma would not willingly submit to. But the presents only inflamed the cupidity of the Spaniards, and Cortez insisted on demanding a personal audience with the emperor. Meanwhile Cortez seeing some persons in the train delineating on white cotton cloth figures of the ships, horses, cannon, soldiers and their costumes, was told that they were to be sent to Montezuma, to give him a more correct idea of the appearance of the strangers than could be conveyed by language. Cortez wishing to give them and their monarch an impression of terror and awe at their superior powers, ordered out his troops.

The trumpets sounded, the soldiers in a moment formed in order of battle, the infantry went through with their evolutions, the cavalry gave a specimen of their terrible power, the artillery were discharged into the woods, making havoc among the trees. The Mexicans looked on in silent amazement, but at the explosion of the cannon, some fled, some fell to the ground, and all were filled with consternation, and were confounded at the sight of men who seemed to wield the powers of the Gods themselves.

By means of couriers stationed on the road, the intelligence was immediately dispatched to Montezuma, and such was the expedition of this mode of communication, that it required but a few days for Cortez to hear from the capital, about two hundred miles distant. Messengers were also sent, carrying some European curiosities to the emperor. Teutile and Pilpatoe were instructed to communicate the answer to Cortez.

Previous to this they endeavored to prepare the way for his acquiescence, by delivering presents sent by Montezuma. These were introduced by a train of a hundred Indians, each loaded with the rich treasures, which were placed upon mats, so as to display them to the best advantage.

Among these were cotton cloths of so fine texture as to resemble silk; pictures of various natural objects, formed of bright colored feathers so skilfully arranged and intermingled as to resemble the finest paintings; collars, bracelets, rings and other ornaments, specimens of pearls, precious stones, gold dust, and two large circular plates, one of massive gold, representing the sun, the other of silver, an emblem of the moon. The value of the gold disc alone, which was richly carved with plants and animals, was estimated at about two hundred thousand dollars.

The Mexicans hoped by this display of the wealth and power of their monarch, and by his generosity to them, that the Spaniards would be induced to depart. They accordingly told Cortez that their master desired him to accept the gifts as a token of regard, but that he could not consent to have foreign troops approach nearer to his capital, or remain longer in his country. But as may be supposed, these proofs of the richness of the country only made the greedy Spaniards the more eager to take immediate possession of it. Cortez expressed his gratitude for the princely gifts he had received, but insisted on his first demand, saying he

could not return without an interview with their sovereign, whom he was commissioned to visit in the name of his king.

The Mexicans were astonished at his presumption, being accustomed to see the will of Montezuma instantly obeyed; and they requested time to consult the emperor once more.

Montezuma and his counsellors were greatly embarrassed, and knew not what course to pursue. A superstitious idea had for some time prevailed, that a race of formidable invaders from the regions of the rising sun would overrun and desolate their country. Probably this idea arose from the vague and shadowy reports of the white men, who had touched on the shores of the continent some years before. Montezuma dreading a war with such formidable enemies, sent them a more positive command to leave his shores, and very unwisely accompanied his order with additional presents. Teutile delivered the rich gifts and the final command of his sovereign; and Cortez still persisting in his demand to visit the emperor, the Mexican left the camp with looks and gestures which expressed his surprise and indignation at the insolence of the Spanish commander. All friendly intercourse now ceased, and it was expected that the resentment of the Indians would immediately break out into open hostility.

At this juncture, the difficulties of Cortez were increased by disaffection among his men. They saw the danger of their situation, in a populous and powerful country, whose ruler would spare no means to effect their destruction. Some of the army were the friends of Velasques, and taking advantage of the unfavorable prospects, the leader of the disaffected soldiers presented a remonstrance to Cortez and demanded to be conducted back to Cuba, to refit their fleet and procure an army more adequate to the conquest of so great an empire. Cortez immediately gave orders to prepare to sail the next day; the effect was what he anticipa-

ted; clamor and confusion prevailed in the camp; the soldiers demand to see their leader, and asked him whether it was worthy of Castilian courage to be daunted at the first appearance of danger, and to retreat before the enemy appeared. They were ready to encounter any danger under him as their leader, and to press forward to secure the objects of their voyage; but if he chose to return, they would immediately appoint a new general, and pursue the enterprise they had undertaken.

Cortez delighted with their ardor, took no offence at the boldness with which it was uttered; and declared that their sentiments agreed with his own; the order to re-embark had been given, because he thought it was their wish; but now he was ready to prosecute his original design, which was, to establish a settlement on the coast, and then advance into the interior; and he doubted not that he could lead them in a career of glory and fortune. The shouts of the soldiers testified their joy, and those who caused the disturbance were obliged to join in the acclamations to avoid the imputation of insubordination and cowardice.

Preparatory to forming a settlement, Cortez had a council of magistrates elected, to administer the government on the model of a Spanish corporation. To this tribunal Cortez resigned the commission which he had received from Velasques, stating that though he had been accustomed to command, yet he should cheerfully obey whomsoever they might see fit to place at the head of affairs.

The object of Cortez was to throw off all dependence on the governor of Cuba, and establish an independent colony, subject only to the king of Spain. As the council was composed of the firm friends of Cortez, they immediately chose him captain-general of the army, and chief justice of the colony; and made out his commission in the king's name, conferring ample powers, and to continue in force till the royal pleasure should be further known. The troops on being

consulted, confirmed the appointment by acclamation, and swore they would shed the last drop of their blood in supporting the authority of their general and governor. Some of the friends of Velasques, complained of these proceedings as illegal, but the leaders of the faction were put in chains on board the vessels, and soon became reconciled with the commander.

Some of the officers of Cortez having been employed in surveying the coast, found a location about forty miles to the north, which appeared more favorable for a settlement on account of its harbor, and other reasons. To this place they removed; and having marked out the town, they called it *Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz*—the rich town of the true cross, a name significant of the avarice and enthusiasm which prompted their adventures. Here they erected huts to protect them from the weather, and surrounded their village with fortifications sufficient to secure them against any attacks from the Indians.

On his way to this place, Cortez and some of his men passed through the village of Cempoalla, and learned from the caciques of the province many particulars respecting Montezuma. They said they were oppressed by his tyranny, and would be glad to throw off his yoke. He was haughty, cruel, and suspicious; ruined the provinces by excessive exactions, and often tore away their sons to sacrifice to his deities, and their daughters to be concubines for himself or favorites. Cortez received this information with a high degree of satisfaction, for he concluded that this disaffection existed also in other provinces, and that many would unite their arms with his to subdue their oppressor.

While engaged in erecting their rude dwellings, and the fortifications, the caciques of Cempoalla, and of Quiabislan, frequently visited them, and Cortez improved the opportunities to inspire them with lofty ideas respecting the power of the Spaniards, and to encourage their opposition to the authority

of Montezuma. Relying on the protection of Cortez, they soon ventured to insult that power at which they had been accustomed to tremble. Some of Montezuma's officers having come among them to collect the usual tribute, and to demand a certain number of human victims for the guilt of having entertained the strangers after the emperor had commanded them to leave his dominions, the caciques seized the deputies, threw them into prison, and were about to sacrifice them to their gods. But Cortez rescued them from this fate, and told them to report to their sovereign his disapprobation of the insult offered to his ministers, and his timely interference in their behalf.

Having thus been instigated to an act of open rebellion, the Cempoallans united with the Spaniards, as the only means to save them from the wrath of Montezuma. Cortez induced them to acknowledge themselves vassals of the Spanish monarch; and their example was followed by several other tribes.

Before starting to the interior, Cortez had the magistrates of the colony prepare a highly colored description of the country they had discovered, the progress they had made in subduing it to the Spanish dominion, together with a justification for throwing off the authority of the governor of Cuba, and a request to have their course sanctioned, and the commission of Cortez confirmed by His Majesty, Charles the fifth. Cortez dispatched a vessel to Spain with this report, and a similar letter of his own, with many specimens of wealth, to confirm the statements in regard to the richness of the country.

Another manifestation of disaffection now appeared in the little army. Some of the men had formed a design to seize one of the ships and return to Cuba. The design was discovered and defeated; but Cortez was aware that many of his followers secretly longed to return to their homes and estates in Cuba, and that upon any appearance of extraordinary danger, or any reverse of for-

tune, it would be impossible to prevent them from returning thither. After much reflection and deep solicitude, he resolved to put his men in a position where they must conquer or perish, and such was his influence over them, that he brought them to acquiesce in the bold expedient

To some he represented the vessels as decayed and unfit for service. It is said that he had secretly caused holes to be bored in the bottoms. To others he pointed out the advantage of having a reinforcement of a hundred men, now unprofitably employed as sailors; no one should think of retreat, nothing but victory and fortune.

With universal consent the ships were drawn ashore, stripped of sails, rigging, and iron works, and then broken in pieces.

Thus by the wonderful skill and address of Cortez, who seemed equal to every emergency, were six hundred men induced to cut off the possibility of retreat, and shut themselves up in a hostile land filled with powerful and warlike nations.

Everything now appeared favorable for commencing the march towards the golden city of the Mexican monarch, when an indiscreet zeal for the cross, came nigh involving the Spaniards in serious difficulty. Neither Cortez nor his chaplains had found time to give the natives any ideas respecting the Christian religion, or any proofs of its superiority over their own.

Notwithstanding this, as they were passing through Cempoalla, Cortez ordered his followers to throw down their idols, and set up a crucifix and an image of the Virgin Mary, in their place.

The natives were filled with horror at this violation of their temples and gods; the priests excited them to arms. But so great an ascendancy had Cortez over them, that the commotion was allayed without bloodshed.

Cortez began his march from Cempoalla on the 16th of August, 1519, with five hundred men, fifteen horse, and six field pieces. The remainder of his troops, many of whom

were unfit for active service, were left as a garrison at Vera Cruz. The cacique of Cempoalla, furnished him with provision, and two hundred *Tamames*, whose office was to carry burdens, and perform menial services. He also offered a considerable body of soldiers, but Cortez chose from them only four hundred, many of them persons of note who might be hostages for the fidelity of their master.

Thus prepared, Cortez passed over the level country, and wound his way up the rugged sides of the Cordilleras, the Indian allies dragging the cannon, and the resolute little band clambering up the same precipitous defiles, so lately passed by the American army, bound for the same rich city.

At the close of the second day, the Spaniards reposed on that beautiful spot of earth, which the Aztecs called by the same euphonic name it still enjoys, Jalapa. From thence they continued their ascent, passed the Coffer of Perote, and taking a route to the north of the present one by Puebla. On their march they called at several important towns, where they were received in a friendly manner, and Cortez endeavored through father Olmedo, to inculcate upon them some knowledge of the truths of the Christian religion; and wherever they were willing, he erected a cross for the adoration of the natives.

Arriving on the borders of the independent little republic of Tlascala, and having learned that they were the mortal enemies of the Mexicans, Cortez hoped to meet a friendly reception from them. He sent four Cempoallan chiefs to request permission to pass through their territory on his march against the city of Mexico. The Tlascalans were suspicious of these foreign invaders, and instead of granting their request, seized the ambassadors and were preparing to sacrifice them to their gods. Cortez marched into their country, but being a brave and warlike nation, they attacked him with immense armies and with great fury.

But the superiority of the weapons, and discipline of the Spaniards prevailed; and in several battles thousands of the enemy were slain, while the Spaniards only had two horses killed, and several men wounded.

Before attacking the Spaniards, the Tlascalans showed a sort of barbarous generosity by forewarning them of their intentions, and sending them food, saying they scorned to attack an enemy enfeebled by hunger, and moreover their gods would not be delighted with famished victims for sacrifice. These warriors had a good idea of their military prowess, having in their mountainous country baffled all the attempts of the mighty Montezuma to subdue them; but when they had failed to kill a single Spaniard, they began to think the white men invincible, and consulted their priests as to what could be done to repel these unwelcome intruders. After consulting their oracles, the priests replied, that the Spaniards were the children of the Sun, and were invincible while cherished by his vivifying beams, but at night they would be weak as other men.

Encouraged by this plausible declaration, the Tlascalans, contrary to their usual custom in war, prepared to dispatch their enemies by night. But Cortez never permitted the possibility of a surprise. His sentinels gave the alarm, the troops were instantly formed, and sallying out of the camp, repulsed the enemy with great slaughter.

One thing that prevented the success of the Indians, was their custom of carrying off their dead during battle, that they might not be devoured by their enemies. They were accordingly surprised that the Spaniards not only sent back their prisoners, but even gave them presents. But some spies coming into the camp, Cortez cut off their hands, and sent them back to their people.

At this they were smitten with consternation and still more perplexed. Their priests and oracles had failed, and they knew not whether to consider the Spaniards a race of good or evil beings. 'If,' said they 'you

are divinities of a cruel and savage nature, we present you with five slaves, that you may drink their blood and eat their flesh; if you are mild deities, accept an offering of incense and variegated plumes; if you are mortals, here is meat, and bread, and fruit to nourish you.'

Peace was now concluded with the Tlascalans, they yielding themselves as vassals to the crown of Castile, and engaging to assist Cortez in his future operations; at the same time receiving his assurance of protecting themselves and their possessions.

This alliance was very opportune for the Spaniards, who were nearly worn out with the fatigue of watching and fighting. The Tlascalans continued the faithful friends of the Spaniards, and it was chiefly by their aid that the conquest of the Mexican empire was effected.

Cortez remained twenty days at Tlascala, to recruit his troops; in the meantime obtaining from his new friends, all the information he could respecting Montezuma and his empire, and endeavoring to instruct the chiefs in the principles of Christianity. Finding them unwilling to give up their superstitions, Cortez became excited, and was about to overturn their altars and idols, as at Cempoalla; but father Olmedo, acting with more consistency and prudence, represented to him the folly of thus hastily thrusting upon them a new religion, which they were so little prepared to receive, and the danger of again involving himself in hostilities with this powerful nation. By these considerations Cortez was dissuaded from his rash designs.

Reinforced by six thousand Tlascalans, he now directed his course to Cholula, a populous city, about eighteen miles distant, and celebrated for its great pyramid or temple, similar in form to that of Mexico, and so vast in its dimensions as to cover forty-four acres of ground. He was received into the city with apparent friendship, but soon discovered a deeply laid plot to cut off the Spaniards at a blow. Having obtained satis-

factory evidence of this, Cortez resolved to make such an example as should inspire his enemies with terror. He drew up his army in the centre of the city, summoned together the people, seized the magistrates, and then his troops and Tlascalan allies fell upon the multitude, deprived of their leaders, and so surprised and astonished, that their weapons dropping from their hands, they stood motionless, and incapable of defence. A terrible slaughter ensued. The streets flowed with blood and were filled with the dead. The temples were set on fire and consumed, with the priests and chief families who had taken refuge in them. This scene of slaughter continued two days; and six thousand Cholulans perished, without the loss of a single Spaniard.

From Cholula Cortez advanced directly to Mexico, which was but sixty miles distant. Many of the villages he passed through, hailed him as their deliverer from oppression, and he was well pleased to find disaffection so near the capital of the empire. The unhappy monarch and his counsellors were greatly perplexed to know what course to pursue. One day he sent messengers to the Spaniards, permitting them to advance, the next commanding them to retire, according as his hopes or fears prevailed. As Cortez approached the city, a train of a thousand persons of distinction came out to meet him, adorned with plumes and clad in mantles of fine cotton. Each, in order, passed by saluting Cortez in the manner most respectful in their country. Soon the emperor followed in his palanquin, covered with a rich canopy, and borne on the shoulders of four of his nobles. His retinue consisted of two hundred persons of the highest rank, and arrayed in gorgeous apparel. Three officers walked before him with rods of gold, which they raised at intervals as a signal for the people to bow their heads and cover their faces in presence of their august sovereign. Cortez dismounted and advanced to meet him. At the same time Montezuma alighted from his

sedan, and, leaning on the arms of two of his chief men, advanced with slow and stately step, cotton mantles being spread upon the ground before him. Cortez saluted him in a reverential manner, and Montezuma returned the salutation with equal deference, touching his hand to the ground and then kissing it. The Mexicans were astonished at this act of condescension on the part of their monarch, whom they considered as next to the gods. Having conducted the Spaniards to the quarters prepared for them, Montezuma thus addressed Cortez: 'You are now with your brothers in your own house; refresh yourself after your fatigue, and be happy until I return.' The place allotted to the army was formerly a palace, built by the father of Montezuma, surrounded by a wall, and so spacious as to accommodate the Spaniards and their Indian allies.

Mexico was then surrounded by the waters of lake Tescuco, and approached by three dykes or causeways, thirty feet wide, with openings and draw-bridges at proper distances. The dyke leading to the west was a mile and a half long, that to the north three miles, and one to the south six miles. The houses of the common people were no better than huts, but the dwellings of the higher classes, the palace and the temples, were built of stone and lime and were quite commodious and magnificent.

Having learned that Montezuma had caused an attack to be made on Vera Cruz, and that some of the garrison had been killed, Cortez began to feel alarmed on account of his own situation. The draw-bridges might be broken down, and, shut up in a hostile city, his army might be overwhelmed by the enemy. Reflecting on this danger, he resolved on an expedient more daring than that of destroying his ships; it was to seize Montezuma and retain him as a hostage in the Spanish quarters. The officers of Cortez were astonished at the audacity of the proposed measure; but he convinced them that it was the only course to secure them from

destruction. At the usual hour of visiting Montezuma, Cortez repaired to the palace with five brave officers and as many trusty soldiers; thirty chosen men sauntering along the street, as if without design, and the rest of the army prepared to sally out if necessary. As the Spaniards entered the palace, the Mexican officers retired as usual out of respect, and Cortez sternly addressed Montezuma, accusing him of instigating the attack on the garrison of Vera Cruz, and demanding satisfaction. The monarch filled with astonishment asserted his innocence, and promised to have the officer who made the attack brought prisoner to Mexico. Cortez appeared to be in a measure satisfied on that point, but told him that the Spaniards would not be convinced that he did not harbor hostile intentions towards them, unless as a proof of confidence, he would repair to their quarters, where he would be served by his own attendants and with his usual honors. Montezuma was filled with indignation and alarm, and remonstrated against such an unreasonable demand. The parley continued for a long time, and Cortez vainly tried to make him comply, when at length Velasques de Leon, a bold and impetuous young man, impatiently exclaimed, 'Why waste more words on this barbarian? Let us seize him instantly or stab him to the heart.' The threatening voice and looks and the fierce gestures with which this was uttered, intimidated Montezuma. He submitted to his fate, and surrounded by his attendants and bathed in tears, he was borne to the Spanish quarters.

Qualpopoca, the commander in the attack on Vera Cruz, his son, and six of his principal officers were given up to Cortez, tried by a court martial, condemned, and burnt alive in the presence of vast multitudes of the Mexicans, who looked on with silent amazement and horror, at this refined barbarity of the Spaniards.

Cortez not only detained the emperor a prisoner, but governed the country in his

name and by his influence. The Spaniards sent out some of their number to visit the different provinces, deposed chiefs and appointed others more subservient to their interests, and conducted as if already masters of the country. At length the spirit of Montezuma had become so thoroughly subdued, that Cortez succeeded in inducing him to acknowledge himself a tributary and vassal of the king of Spain. The unhappy monarch called together the chief men of his empire and stated to them his determination; he considered the Spaniards to be the race which their traditions had indicated would come among them to rule the land, and he would lay his crown at the feet of their sovereign. But as he spoke, his utterance was choked with emotion; tears and groans showed the depth of his anguish at this last and most humiliating condition to which a proud-spirited monarch could be reduced.

After all these indignities and hard requirements, Cortez endeavored to persuade Montezuma to adopt the religion of those who had robbed him of his kingdom. To this he would not yield; and Cortez enraged at his obstinacy, commanded his men to throw down the idols in the temples. But the priests took up arms and roused the people to defend their temples from this sacrilege. This insult to their deities was not to be endured, and the Mexicans now began to concert measures to expel these impious invaders. They consulted with each other and with the captive prince, who was still permitted to confer with his officers. Montezuma, wishing to avoid bloodshed, advised Cortez to leave the city and country immediately, or certain destruction would overtake him. Cortez pretended to acquiesce, but said, as his ships had been destroyed, he would need to wait to build new ones; which seemed very reasonable to Montezuma, and he accordingly used his influence to quiet his people.

While thus alarmed at his situation in the city, Cortez was made acquainted with a more

serious difficulty in another quarter. Valasques, the governor of Cuba, was indignant at the conduct of Cortez in betraying his confidence and throwing off his authority. He fitted out a larger armament, of eighteen vessels, with eight hundred foot soldiers, eighty horsemen, and twelve cannon. The command of this expedition was intrusted to Pamphilio Narvaez, who was to send Cortez prisoner to Cuba and then complete the conquest of the country.

In this embarrassing situation Cortez hardly knew what course to adopt. But his plan was soon formed and successfully executed. He left one hundred and fifty men under the command of Alvarado, to guard the royal prisoner and keep the city in subjection, and started for the coast with the remainder of his troops, which, when joined by the garrison at Vera Cruz, did not exceed two hundred and fifty men. Cortez sent to Narvaez offers of accommodation, but the latter relying on his superior numbers and confident of victory, treated the proposals with contempt, and offered a reward for Cortez' head. Cortez having arrived at the bank of a river, Narvaez marched out to give him battle, but it being near night, the stream high, and the rain pouring down, the forces of Narvaez returned to their encampment at some distance, to enjoy their repose after the fatigues of the day. Cortez forded the river, and fell upon the enemy in the dead of night, and after a desperate struggle, in which Narvaez was wounded and made prisoner, they surrendered at discretion.

Cortez treated the vanquished in the most friendly manner, offering to send them back to Cuba or take them into his service. Influenced by the prospect of wealth, and willing to serve under a commander of whose abilities they had just experienced such proof, all, except a few friends of Narvaez, joined the standard of the conqueror. Thus by the ability and energy of Cortez, that which threatened his ruin was turned to his greatest advantage. He now found himself at the

head of one thousand Spaniards, and without fear of further molestation from Cuba. Hardly had the victory over Narvaez been achieved, when a courier came bringing intelligence, that the Mexicans had risen upon the garrison in the capital, and threatened their destruction unless they were speedily relieved. This outbreak was caused by the cruelty and rapacity of the Spaniards, who, to obtain the rich ornaments with which they were adorned, slaughtered two thousand of the Mexican nobles, as they were engaged in a solemn festival in honor of their gods.—Some affirm that a conspiracy was on foot to destroy the garrison, and this massacre was an imitation of that at Cholula.

Cortez hastened his march towards Mexico, and as he passed along the people deserted the villages, carrying off the provisions and showing other signs of hostility. In the capital, they had destroyed the two sail boats Cortez had built to command the lake, had burned the magazines, and were harrassing and besieging the Spaniards so closely, that they must have yielded ere long to the fury of the assailants.

Cortez arrived, and astonishing as it may seem, the Mexicans had not removed any of the draw-bridges or taken other measures to prevent his entering the city. The garrison were overjoyed to see their countrymen again, and Cortez, elated with his recent success, and now having a considerable of a force, began to treat the unfortunate Montezuma with contempt, and without disguise to intimate his design of subjugating the country. This conduct showed the Mexicans their true condition; they must expel these invaders or become their abject slaves. Emboldened by their success in attacking the garrison and killing several of them, the Mexicans collected in vast numbers and, the next day after Cortez arrived, they attacked the Spanish quarters with great impetuosity. The artillery swept down their thick ranks, but fresh multitudes supplied the place of those who had fallen, and pressed on with such fury

that Cortez could hardly maintain his fortifications against their assaults. The enemy having retired at night, according to their custom, Cortez prepared to sally out next day and drive them from the city, or compel them to an accommodation. The Mexicans, led by their nobles and aroused by their priests, opposed him with great bravery, and though Cortez cut his way wherever he went, the enemy pressed on him and fought with such desperation, that they killed twelve of his men, wounded sixty others, and obliged him to retire to his quarters.

Alarmed at his situation, amidst an enraged population whose numbers were constantly increasing by additions from the adjoining country, Cortez now besought the interposition of Montezuma to soothe his people.—When the Mexicans on the next morning approached to renew the attack, this unfortunate prince, constrained to become the instrument of his own disgrace, appeared on the battlements, clad in his royal robes, and endeavored to appease his people and dissuade them from hostilities. At the sight of their monarch, the people bowed in reverence; but when he ceased speaking a sullen murmur arose from the multitude; threats and imprecations followed, and indignation overcoming the respect for their sovereign, a shower of missiles fell upon the battlements, and before the Spaniards could raise their shields to protect him, he was wounded by two arrows, and the blow of a stone on his temple struck him to the ground.

Seeing their monarch fall a sudden change came over the multitude. Smitten with remorse and horror at the deed, they dropped their arms and fled as if the vengeance of Heaven were pursuing them.

The Spaniards carried Montezuma to his apartments, and Cortez endeavored to console him. But his measure of woe was full, his ignominy was complete; a slave to a foreign ruler, a prisoner among his enemies, the object of vengeance and contempt to his own subjects. His proud spirit returning, he

scorned to survive this last degree of degradation. In a transport of feeling he tore the bandages from his wound, refused to take any nourishment, and ended his wretched existence, rejecting with disdain the solicitations of the Spaniards to embrace the christian faith.

The death of Montezuma terminated all hopes of peace with the Mexicans, and as the only means to escape destruction, Cortez resolved on a speedy retreat. But the Mexicans took possession of the great temple, which overlooked the Spanish quarters, and rendered it impossible for the troops to venture out without being exposed to the enemies' missiles. A company of chosen men endeavoring to dislodge them were thrice repulsed. Cortez then put himself at the head of his bravest followers, succeeded in gaining the upper platform on the temple, where a desperate struggle and great slaughter of both parties ensued. Two young Mexicans sprang upon Cortez, intending to throw themselves and him from the edge of the tower, and thus sacrifice their lives for their country; but with incredible exertion he disengaged himself from their grasp, and they lost their own lives without effecting their object.

Having taken the tower, Cortez prepared for retreat, and chose the night time to leave the city, hoping the Mexicans would not molest them, as they had a superstitious dislike of fighting in the night. He was to pass the causeway to the west, that being the shortest. The draw-bridges being broken down he made a portable one to throw over the breaches. At midnight he led his army and allies out as silently as possible; but the Mexicans had watched his movements; the priests blew their horns and beat the great serpent-skin drum on the temple; the whole city was in motion. While the retreating army was placing their portable bridge over the first breach, they were astonished by a tremendous shout, and the rush of canoes which covered the lake, and were assailed by a tempest of arrows and stones and other

missiles. Having passed the first breach, their dismay and confusion were increased by an unexpected difficulty. Their portable bridge had become wedged in the mud and stones, and it was impossible to remove it.— They defended themselves as well as they could against the furious assaults of the enemy, but their skill and superior weapons did not help them much, in the darkness of the night, and crowded together on the causeway. They pressed on, amidst dreadful slaughter and confusion, and the dead bodies of their companions filling the breaches, they succeeded in passing the causeway and gaining the shore.

Two thousand of the Tlascalcan allies had perished; one half of the Spaniards were killed, and many of the others wounded; their artillery, ammunition, baggage and most of the horses were lost, together with the greater part of their ill-gotten treasures of silver and gold, which encumbered their persons and sunk many in the waves. When the light dawned upon the wretched remains of his army, even the stern Cortez could not suppress his tears for the loss of so many of his friends and brave companions in arms. This has since been known by the name of the *Noche triste*, the doleful night.

The Spaniards now continued their retreat towards Tlascala, as rapidly as their exhausted condition, and want of food would permit their march through woods and swamps and a broken country, with occasional attacks from the pursuing enemy. On the sixth day, approaching near Otumba, numerous parties were seen hovering around, and Marina, the interpreter, said they often exultingly cried, 'Go on, robbers, go to the place where you shall quickly meet the vengeance due to your crimes.' Arriving at the ridge of a mountain, they understood the import of these ominous words; the plain was covered by a countless multitude waiting to receive them. The Spaniards, without their fire-arms and in their miserable condition, were appalled at the sight. But Cortez was still undaunt-

ed; he told them that there was no alternative but to conquer or perish, and immediately led them to the charge. In close array they cut their way amongst the dense masses, obliging them to give way, and covering the ground with dead. The undisciplined host fought bravely against superior skill and surer weapons, pressing forward in fresh numbers, and surrounding the little army, till the Spaniards, wearied with slaughtering, and covered with wounds, were on the point of being overwhelmed by numbers.— At this crisis, Cortez, seeing the Mexican standard near, and recollecting to have heard that on the fate of their banner depended the issue of a battle, rushed forward with a few of his bravest officers, struck down the general with a lance and seized the standard which he held. The effect was magical.— Their leader and banner lost, the Mexicans were panic-stricken, and fled to the mountains, leaving the field covered with rich booty.

The next day the Spaniards arrived at Tlascala, where they were kindly received, notwithstanding their declining prospects and power. In spite of all his disasters, Cortez never once abandoned his design of conquering the Mexican empire. He obtained ammunition and three field pieces from Vera Cruz, and despatched four of the vessels of Narvaez's fleet to Hispaniola and Jamaica, for more supplies and volunteers. He also set about building twelve brigantines, under the direction of a ship-carpenter who happened to be in the army, to command the lake and aid in taking the capital. These were to be carried in pieces, sixty miles by land, and then put together and launched.— His men perceiving his intention of making another attempt on the city, were loud in their murmurs; but the tact and eloquence of Cortez quieted their disaffection.

Two vessels sent out to reinforce Narvaez, coming to Vera Cruz, their troops and crews were induced to join Cortez; and the seamen and soldiers of several other vessels ar-

living on the coast, also united with the conqueror. He now found that he had five hundred and fifty foot soldiers, forty horsemen, and nine field pieces, together with a reinforcement of ten thousand Tlascalans. With this force, without waiting for the vessels he had despatched to the islands, he started for Mexico, on the 28th of December, 1520, just six months after his retreat from the scene of his disasters.

On the death of Montezuma, the Mexican chiefs had immediately elevated to the throne, Quetlavaca, his brother, who showed his ability and bravery, by conducting those fierce attacks on the retreating Spaniards. While engaged in fortifying his capital against any other assault that might be made upon it, he was cut off by the small pox, which was then raging in the empire, and was one of the calamities introduced by Europeans. To Quetlavaca succeeded Guatimozin, the nephew, and son-in-law of Montezuma, and the last emperor of the Aztec race. He was a young man, distinguished for his bravery and abilities, and was elected by unanimous consent.

Cortez found some obstruction, trees and stone thrown across the roads, but continued his march without much difficulty, and fixed his head quarters in Tezcuco, the second town in the empire, about twenty miles from Mexico, on the opposite side of the lake.— This was a favorable place for launching his brigantines; during the preparation of which, he subjected a number of towns in the neighborhood, thus weakening the Mexican power. At this time the lurking spirit of insubordination again appeared among his men, and threatened to terminate his ambitious schemes at once. A small faction had entered into a conspiracy to assassinate Cortez, and confer the command on some one who would regard the safety of the army rather than his own aggrandisement. On the day when this was to be executed, one of his friends, who had been seduced into the measure, disclosed the plot to Cortez, who seized and executed the ringleader, Villefragua, and thus terminated the affair.

The materials for the fleet being completed, Cortez despatched a body of Spaniards as an escort in their transportation. Eight thousand *Tamanes*, or porters, were furnished by the Tlascalans to carry the timber, planks, and the rigging saved from the vessels destroyed at Vera Cruz. As a protection to the *Tamanes*, fifteen thousand Tlascalan warriors accompanied. This immense and strange convoy arrived safe at Tezcuco; and about the same time the four vessels, which had been sent to Hispaniola, returned with two hundred soldiers, eighty horses, two battering cannon, and a supply of ammunition and arms. Thus things began to wear a more favorable aspect for the invaders. On the 28th of April, the brigantines were launched with military pomp and religious ceremonies. The troops and allies were drawn up upon the bank, mass was said, and as the vessels dropped down the canal into the lake, father Olmedo blessed them, and gave each its name. As they hoisted sail and bore away before the wind, shouts of joy went up from the ranks of the Spaniards, while dismay was depicted in the countenance of the Mexicans, at the sight of these strange and formidable engines, moving with their white wings over their waters, hitherto skimmed only by the light canoe.

Though small and rudely constructed, the vessels were appalling objects to the Mexicans, and justly too, since they deprived them of the advantage of the insular position of the city. Hence Guatimozin determined, if possible to destroy them. He assembled a vast multitude of canoes thinking to make up in number what they lacked in size. With these the Mexicans advanced to engage the brigantines, which, on account of a dead calm, remained almost motionless; but suddenly a breeze sprung up, the sails were spread, the vessels broke through the crowds of canoes, oversetting many and scattering the whole armament, with such destruction of the Mexicans as convinced them that the superiority of their enemies was greater on

water than they had hitherto found it on land.

Being master of the lake, Cortez prepared to commence the siege with vigor. He divided his forces, and stationed them at the extremities of the causeways, allotting to each a number of the sail boats, to assist in the operations and communicate between the stations. During the day the Spaniards would force their way over the breast-works thrown across the causeways, and, filling up the gaps of the drawbridges, would pass them and drive the Mexicans before them; but they retreated at the close of the day, not daring to quarter in the city, for fear of being overwhelmed by the multitudes of the enemy. At night the Mexicans cleared the trenches, and repaired the barricades that had been thrown down; and when the assaults were renewed next morning, they disputed the ground with the greatest bravery against the Spaniards. A month had passed without any decisive result; on land, on water, by night and by day one furious conflict succeeded another, and each party fought as if determined to conquer or perish. 'At length Cortez, astonished at the obstinacy of the Mexicans, resolved to attempt by a great and bold effort to get possession of the city. He made a general assault at the three points of attack, with his whole force, and pushing on with irresistible impetuosity, they forced their way over one barricade after another, and penetrated into the city. But the officer ordered to fill up the trenches, and keep the command of the same, to secure a retreat in case it should become necessary, having neglected that duty and joined in the conflict, Gautimozin, availing himself of this mistake, suffered the Spaniards to advance into the heart of the town, when the sound of the great drum of the temple consecrated to the god of war, was heard as a signal for action; the whole population rushed with frantic fury to the scene of strife, and fell on their invaders with irresistible impetuosity; the Spaniards at first retired slowly and in order; but when they arrived at the breach in the

causeway, where the Mexicans had concentrated a large force to intercept their retreat, being pressed on all sides, they were thrown into confusion, and horse and foot, Spaniards and Tlascalans, plunged promiscuously into the gap. The Mexicans, encouraged by success, pressed furiously upon them from all quarters; their canoes covered the lake, and the causeway both before and behind was blocked up with their warriors. Cortez himself was sieged by several of them, but by his utmost efforts and the aid of two of his men who lost their lives to save his, he tore himself from their grasp. After incredible exertions, the Spaniards forced their way through the multitudes of their enemies, with the loss of more than twenty killed and forty taken prisoners.

These last unhappy victims were sacrificed the following night to the god of war, as a horrid triumph. The whole city was illuminated; by the glare of the fires on the temple, the Spaniards could see the dreadful preparations; their ears were appalled at the sound of the great drum announcing the bloody orgies, and they were filled with grief and horror by the shrieks of their companions, about to be immolated to the diabolical deities of their enemies. The heads of the victims were sent to the different provinces, and exhibited, with the declaration that the god of war, appeased by the blood of their enemies, had declared that in eight days their invaders should be destroyed, and peace restored to the empire. The success of the Mexicans, together with this confident prediction, had a magic effect, and the people flocked in from all quarters, to assist in conquering a hated foe, whom the gods had decreed to destroy. Cortez stationed his troops under the protection of his ships, which kept the enemy at a distance until the eight days had expired; and such was the influence of superstition, that most of his allies, in the mean time, deserted him; but after the fatal period had elapsed, and the Spaniards still being safe, they were ashamed of their

credulity, and returned to their stations.

Although Cortez now found himself in possession of a numerous force of Indians, yet past experience taught him to adopt a new and more safe mode of carrying on the siege. He made slow but gradual advances; his Indian allies repaired the causeways as he advanced, and as the Spaniards got possession of any part of the city, their allies were employed in levelling the houses to the ground. Thus they compelled the Mexicans daily to retire, and gradually circumscribed the limits of the town. The immense multitude which had assembled in the city, consumed the supplies of provisions, and they were suffering the horrors of famine within, while assailed by the enemy from without. Cortez frequently sent proposals to Guatimozin to surrender and save the city, but he indignantly rejected the idea of submission.

Having the command of the lake, and from the numerous body of his Indian allies, Cortez was enabled to cut off all communications with the city. Three quarters of it were reduced to ashes, when at length the three divisions of the Spaniards penetrated into the great central square, and established a secure position. The fate of the city was now decided, as it was evident that what remained, being assailed from more advantageous stations, could hold out but a short time. At this crisis the chiefs and nobles prevailed on Guatimozin to retire to the provinces and attempt to arouse the people; and to facilitate his escape, they opened a negotiation for peace with Cortez. But the latter, too vigilant to be deceived, had given strict orders to watch the lake and suffer no canoes to pass. The officer to whom this duty was assigned, observing several large canoes crossing the lake with rapidity, ordered a swift-sailing brigantine in pursuit, which as it neared them was about firing, when all the rowers in an instant dropped their oars, and rising and throwing up their hands, besought them not to fire, as the Emperor was on board. Guatimozin sur-

rendered himself with dignity, and only requested that no insult might be offered to the Empress, or his children. When brought into the presence of Cortez, he behaved with a degree of composure and dignity that would have done honor to any monarch on earth. Addressing himself to Cortez, he said, 'I have done what became a monarch; I have defended my people to the last extremity. Nothing now remains but to die. Take this dagger, (laying his hand on one which Cortez wore,) plant it in my breast, and put an end to a life which can no longer be of any use.' Previous to his leaving the city he had caused all his treasures to be thrown into the lake. The siege lasted seventy-five days. The city being usually populous, and multitudes of people and warriors having crowded in from all quarters to defend their sovereign and capital, the destruction by famine and slaughter was immense; the lowest estimate being one hundred and twenty thousand lives. The capture of the sovereign terminated the struggle, and the city and empire fell into the hands of the conquerors, August 13th, 1521. The siege of Mexico was by far the most extraordinary and memorable military effort in the conquest of America. The exertions, bravery, perseverance, and astonishing exploits of Cortez and his followers, are unexampled. Yet it is not to be supposed that the Mexican empire, comprising a vast population, in a considerable state of improvement, was conquered by a few hundred Spaniards; its conquest was effected by internal disaffections and divisions, and the jealousy of its neighbors who dreaded its power, the oppression of which they had often experienced.

The excessive joy of the Spaniards was changed to murmurs, when they learnt the small amount of treasure which had fallen into their hands; and such was their rage and disappointment, that Cortez was obliged to give way to it, and suffer Guatimozin to be put to the torture, to compel him to discover the royal treasures which they supposed he had concealed. And with such dignity and

fortitude did he endure the torture, that when the anguish and pain was at its height, and his fellow-sufferer seemed, by his looks, to ask permission to reveal what he knew, the royal victim, with a look of authority and scorn reproached him for his weakness, by asking, 'Am *I* now reposing on a bed of flowers?' After this reproof his fellow-sufferer remained silent, and expired under the torture of men calling themselves Christians. Cortez ashamed of what he had done, interfered and rescued the royal victim from the hands of his persecutors.

The account of Cortez's victories and conquests, which were sent to Spain, filled his countrymen with admiration, and excited the highest expectations with the people and the government. Charles V. who had succeeded to the throne, appointed Cortez captain-general of New Spain; and before he received any legal sanction, he had assumed the power of governor, and adopted measures to secure the vast country he had conquered to his sovereign, as a colony of Spain. He determined to rebuild the capital, and there to establish the seat of his government; he commenced the work on an extended and regular plan, and laid the foundations of one of the most magnificent cities in the new world. He caused examinations to be made for mines, opened some, and encouraged his countrymen to settle in the remote provinces.

The Mexicans conquered and degraded as they were, did not quietly submit to their new masters; but aroused by oppression and despair, they often, with more courage than discretion, rushed to arms, and were not only defeated in every contest, but the Spaniards, regarding these attempts to regain their liberty as rebellion against their lawful sovereign, put the caciques and nobles, who fell into their hands, to death, and reduced the common people to the most humiliating and degrading servitude. Massacre and bloodshed continued to mark the progress of the Spaniards over the land. In the country of

Panuco, sixty caciques, or leaders and four hundred nobles, were burnt at one time, while their children and relatives were compelled to look on and witness their dying agonies. The brave and unfortunate Guatimozin, on suspicion of exciting his countrymen to revolt, was hanged on a tree, in the presence of his people, who witnessed the scene with grief and horror, being accustomed to reverence their sovereign almost as a deity.

Cortez, though at first admired and caressed by his countrymen and sovereign, and invested with the government of the country he had conquered, soon became the object of envy, calumny, and suspicion, and like Columbus and others who have done great services for their country, he was rewarded by neglect and ingratitude. The title of Marquis was conferred upon him, and ample possessions in the new dominions were secured to himself and his heirs, but he was deprived of the government of the colony, subjected to malignant accusations and vexations and mortifying persecutions; and while waiting in Spain, whither he had gone to seek redress of his greivances from his sovereign, he ended his days on the second of December, 1547.

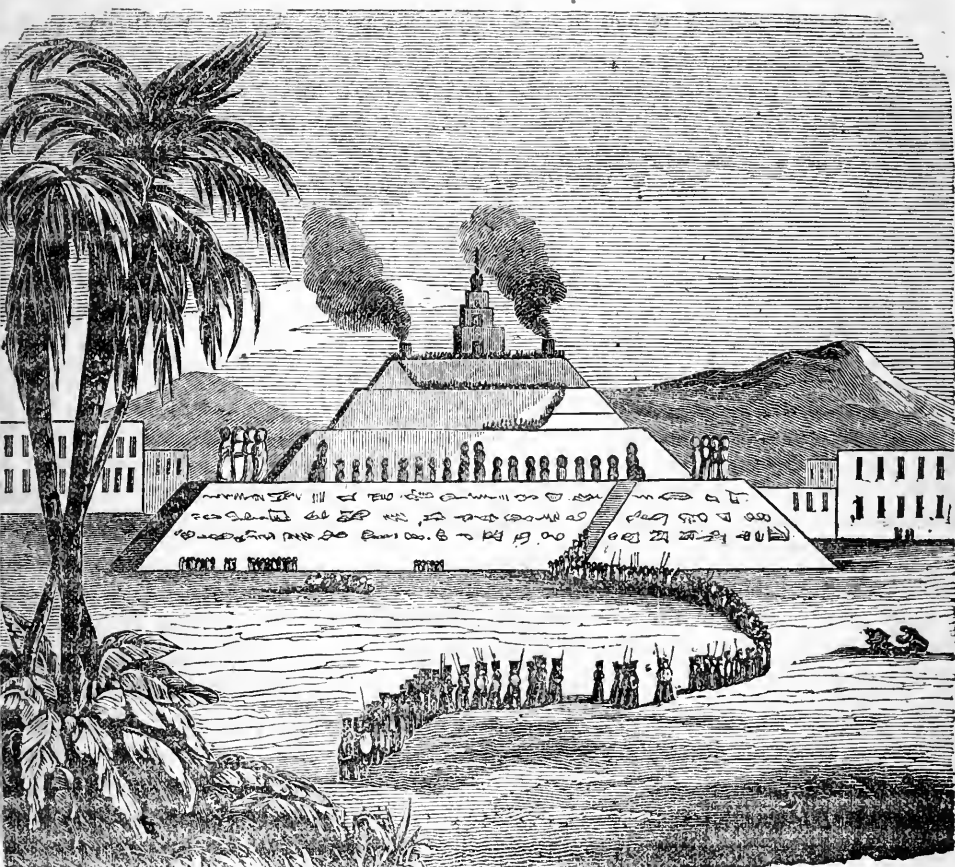
'When we look at the conquest of Mexico,' says M. Chevalier, 'under political and religious aspects, it presents features of great interest, but in other points of view also it is interesting. We seem in its history to read an epic poem or chivalric romance. So vast and stupendous are its incidents and events, the men appear gigantic, and the miralious enters into its composition. To form an idea of the grandeur of the events, we have only to retrace what was achieved. An adventurer, who left Cuba with a handful of soldiers, dares to attack an empire evidently populous and brave, whose sovereign was feared by every one, and had among his vassals 130 tributaries, each of whom could bring into the field 100,000 armed men. Cortez not only compelled it to recognize as its sove-

reign, his master Charles V., but to abandon its religion, the greatest sacrifice a people can be called on to make. He willed it, dared to attempt it, and succeeded within the space of thirty months.

‘But the distinguishing character of the conquest was derived from its religious propagandism. In our days the love of glory and devotion to liberty excite men to great actions. The ruling passion of the Spaniards of that era was the advancement of the holy faith. They were, as it were, possessed of this idea. A motive powerful as this was required to produce, even in such a nature as Cortez, the achievements he performed. Those who say such heroism was inspired by avarice, are either ignorant of, or calumniate human nature. I have attempted to restore to the conquest its true character, and to attribute to Cortez and his companions their true motives. My object has been not merely to define the truth of an isolated historical event, but to recall to an age little prone to faith, what true religious zeal is capable of. It alone gives us the key to Mexican history down to the present time, and of the present condition of this vast empire. In it alone rests the secret of its rapid decay, and equally rapid *possible* regeneration. Cortez was one of those giants who gave such violent impulse to nations they interfere with, that centuries must pass before they can recover from the blow. His personal character is imprint-

ed on the features of Mexico, even on institutions which arose after he had passed from the stage. This beautiful country is exclusively Catholic, and its inhabitants, thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Catholicism, have no prospects in advance separate from their faith. Persons who have sojourned among them and studied their nature, are doubtful whether they will retrocede into barbarity, or will undergo a new conquest by a Protestant race which promises to itself the empire of the world, and which is now inflamed by the possession of Texas: or whether they will remain free, and progress in the pathway of civilization. We may believe from the rank occupied by Mexico in the New World, that, all the republics which were Spanish colonies will follow its destiny, whatever it may be. The question here, which a few years will suffice to solve for Mexico, and the resolution of which is of great import to the whole of the new continent, is more closely connected than is generally conceived, with the vaster one; viz., whether the genius of Catholicism, when in close contact with that of Protestantism, can preserve its position, or whether in our times Catholicism can restore a healthy tone to a people struck with the languor of decay.’

NOTE. In preparing the foregoing chapter, the author has been much indebted to Dr. Robertson's excellent History of the Conquest, and to a summary of the same in the work of Mr. Niles.



**GREAT TEMPLE DEDICATED TO THE SUN,
DESTROYED BY CORTEZ IN 1521.**

It was finished and dedicated in 1486. It was a place for worship and human sacrifice. Sixty thousand victims perished at its dedication, and every part of it was bathed in human blood. It occupied the centre of the city, now the Great Square. It was as a triple pyramid, with a place for sacrifice on the top. It was surrounded by a stone wall eight feet thick, crowned with battlements and ornamented with figures in the form of serpents. The interior of the inclosure was paved with polished porphyry, and was spacious enough to contain 500 houses. The wall had four gates, and over each was a military arsenal. From the centre arose the great TZOACALLIS, or Temple. The great Cathedral now occupies its place.



CHAPTER III.

SPANISH DOMINION—REVOLUTION—THE REPUBLIC.

Viceroy. *Council of Government.* *Municipal Corporations.* *Laws of the Colony.* *Military Force.* *Commerce.* *Literature and Education.* *Agriculture.* *The Church.*—*The War of Independence*—*Causes that led to it.* *Events in Spain.* *Buonaparte siezes the Spanish Crown.* *The Priest Hidalgo commences the Revolution of Mexico.*—*Other Leaders.* *Independence Declared.* *Iturbide made Emperor.* *Plan of Government.* *Biographical Sketch of Iturbide.* *Federal Republican Constitution.* *General Victoria.* *Independence acknowledged by the United States and Great Britain.* *Violence of Partics.* *Masonry.* *Santa Anna commences his Public Career*—*Defeats the last Invading Army of Spain.* *Central Government Established.* *Bustament.* *Gomez Fariar.* *More Revolutions.* *Santa Anna Dictator.* *Constitution of 1843.*—*Last Constitution, of 1847.* *Retrospective View.*

LIKE most of the larger colonies of Spain, Mexico was governed by *Viceroy*, who within his own limits, exercised all the functions of a king, and with hardly greater responsibility or restriction. He was provided with a council of war and a legal adviser; but as they were of his own choosing, the ceremony of consulting them, was probably, merely formal. The only immediate depositary of power, besides the Viceroy, was a council called the '*Audiencia.*' This body was composed exclusively of European Spaniards, and invested with a control over all other tribunals in the country, ecclesiastical as well as civil. It enjoyed immediate correspondence with the sovereign, and with the '*Council of the Indies,*' a Spanish board who had the government of the American colonies, in their immediate charge. The Viceroy was, '*ex-officio,*' a member of the *Audiencia*, and thus effectually controlled its action, so far as it was likely to affect his own interests. The only remaining civil bodies, which it is important to mention, are the municipal corporations, entitled '*Cabildos*' or '*Ayuntamientos.*' These closely resembled the municipal corporations of European towns, at a corresponding period. From the number and wealth of their members, they exercised considerable influence; especially during the later years of the colonial administration. Each town had a superintending magistrate called an '*Alcalde.*' The laws by which the colony was professedly governed, were entitled, '*Recopilacion de las Leyes de las Indias,*' a compilation of

decrees of the kings of Spain, and of the Council of the Indies, massed together without much regard to order or consistency. As is usual in all absolute governments, it is probable that the Viceroy and others in authority, made a shift to dispense with laws on many occasions, and fell back upon their own abstract notions of justice or expediency. Thus it was a law that all offices should be equally open to all citizens whether of European or of native birth, but in point of fact, all offices from the highest to the lowest were bestowed on foreigners. Out of 50 Viceroyalties who held that office from 1535 to 1808, only one was born in America, and he was a Peruvian.

The *military force* of the colony consisted of Spanish regulars, and native militia; but it was never large, as, under the Viceroyalties, the nation was not a war-like one. *Commerce* was permitted only with Spain, and then under many restrictions, and was confined to certain particular ports, and to a limited number of vessels. At a later day, licenses to trade with foreign nations, were granted at exorbitant prices, and met with the abuse, to which arbitrary commercial restrictions always give rise. The consequence was a system of smuggling, the most open and successful, which the history of commerce has ever recorded. With Spaniards smuggling is a second nature, and it needs no great temptation to induce them to incur its hazards. The 'contrabandista' is to this day the hero of the Peninsula—half robber half merchant.

Literature and education were placed under the fostering care of the Inquisition; an institution quite essential to a government of this sort, and which took easy and firm root in Mexico. The tenderness of this spiritual guardian for the souls of those placed under her charge, was so great as to leave nothing free, which could by any possibility contaminate them. As, at as late a period as 1806, there was but one printing press in Mexico, the dangers of domestic in-

condiarism were not very great; but all books imported were subjected to a rigid censorship, and carefully purified of any approaches to political or religious heresy.

Agriculture, even, was not allowed full freedom in the New World. The commercial restrictions to which I have alluded, effectually excluded the exportation of anything but the precious metals; and the colonists were even prohibited from cultivating anything, which was a subject of profitable exportation from the mother country. Vineyards, which the enterprise of some native proprietors had planted, were rooted up, by order of the government, because the Spanish wine merchants complained of a reduction of their profits. If to these grievances be added oppressive taxes of every sort which the avarice or wants of an expensive and grasping government could devise, we shall see nothing particularly to admire in the colonial administration of Mexico. The *Church* though Catholic, was not, as in other Catholic countries, dependant immediately upon the See of Rome. The Spanish monarchs seem to have profited by the prudent example of Henry VIII. and thought it a wise step, to divert the flow of treasure from the coffers of the Italian Pontiff, into their own. They did not, however, like the sturdy and godless sovereign of England, disclaim obedience to the Pope in things spiritual, but merely established a species of factorship or brokerage, between him and their colonial subjects. The commissions on sales, in Mexico, of bulls and indulgences, formed a principal item in the revenue of the Spanish crown. Unlike other commodities, the market was never glutted with them, although '*forced sales*' were very usual. Such was the condition of Mexico until the beginning of the present century. 'It had long been established as a principle,' says a clever writer on this period, 'that to supply Spain with the greatest quantity of the precious metals, and to gratify her nobility and influential persons by lucrative situations

for themselves, or their dependants, were the only purposes for which these countries could be rendered available, without endangering the perpetuity of the dominion over them.'

The first manifestations of a revolutionary spirit in Mexico, were visible near the beginning of the present century, but for several years, they were attended with no serious results, and are hardly worth recording. Events which occurred in Europe, gave the first decided and general impulse to the cause of Independence. Napoleon had become master of central and western Europe, and in May 1808, Charles IV. king of Spain, and his son Ferdinand VII., were forced to resign the Spanish crown, for themselves and their descendants; and it was soon after bestowed upon Joseph Buonaparte, the Emperor's brother. The new dynasty was by no means acceptable to the Spanish nation at large, and a vigorous opposition at once sprang up, in support of the interest of the late reigning family. For the same end, *Juntas*, or Councils of direction, were organized throughout the Peninsula.

A 'Supreme Central Junta,' composed of deputies from the smaller bodies, finally assembled at Seville, proclaimed Ferdinand VII, then in captivity, king, and demanded obedience to themselves in his name. *Don Jose Iturrigaray* was at this time Viceroy of Mexico. On receiving intelligence of the political changes in Spain, he avowed his determination of adhering to the fortunes of his late sovereign, and in pursuance of that intention, he proclaimed the authority of the Supreme Central Junta. The disturbed state of affairs in Europe presented to the Mexicans a favorable opportunity of advancing their own interest, and the 'Ayuntamiento' of the capital, seconded by the municipalities of the other principal towns in the country, petitioned the Viceroy for the formation of a separate Junta in Mexico, to be composed of deputies from their several corporations. *Iturrigaray* was disposed to accede to their wish, but before the proposi-

tion could be acted upon, the 'Audiencia' interposed, arrested the Viceroy, and sent him a prisoner to Spain. Meanwhile they assumed the reins of government by virtue of the authority vested in them by the Council of the Indies. The supreme Junta approved of these bold measures, and confirmed the authority of the Audiencia until a new Viceroy should be appointed. The native and popular party had now just cause of offence, and the seeds of rebellion once sown began rapidly to germinate. The Spanish residents made common cause with each other, and set up the most arrogant pretensions to an exclusive right of governing the colony, a right which the law of prescription certainly gave them. It was a saying with one of these gentry, which well expresses the feeling of his countrymen, that 'while a Manchy's mule, or a Castilian cobbler remained in the Peninsula, he had a right to govern the Americans.'

The supreme Junta in Spain finding their own inefficiency to fulfil the duties they had assumed, resigned their authority into the hands of a *Regency*, of five persons, who were to hold it until a *Cortes* or General Convention of Delegates, could be assembled to settle the government on a more permanent basis. The regency sent to the colonies, requesting them to choose delegates to the *Cortes*; a request to which no attention was given. In the summer of 1810, a new Viceroy, *Don Francisco Xavier Vanegas*, arrived in Mexico, having been appointed by the Regency. He began with a determination to put down all insubordination by force; and the measures which he pursued were of a character to alienate, still further, the popular party.

At length, in September following his arrival, the fires of insurrection burst into a flame. *Don Miguel Hidalgo*, curate of the village of Dolores in the province of Guanajuato, about two hundred miles N. W. of the city of Mexico, headed the revolt. Raising a standard, on which was painted a

figure of the '*Virgin of Guadalupe*,' the guardian saint of Mexico, he gathered round him great numbers of his parishioners, and other native citizens, until they amounted to a large army. His first enterprises met with brilliant success, Guanajuato, and Guadalajara, two of the most considerable cities north of Mexico, and capitals of Provinces, fell into his hands. The city of Mexico even was threatened, and would have probably been taken, but for an unaccountable timidity which induced Hidalgo to retreat. The government, having thus had time to rally, met the insurrection vigorously. The royal troops soon found opportunity to display the superiority of a disciplined corps, over badly armed, and undisciplined recruits. The insurgents were defeated, with great loss, at the battle of the Bridge of Calderon; and early in 1811, Hidalgo was betrayed by some of his followers and shot.

In the meantime, the Cortes summoned by the Regency in Spain, met in the autumn of 1810. No deputies appearing from America, substitutes were appointed, and the deliberations of the body were commenced. Acts were passed, giving new privileges to the colonies, with the hope of reclaiming them by concessions. In 1812 a new *Constitution*, for Spain and her dependencies, was framed by the Cortes; by which equal privileges were to be granted to Spaniards on both sides of the Atlantic; and all persons were to be regarded as Spaniards, within the purview of the law, who had no African blood in their veins. The functions of the government were distributed, after the most approved manner, into Executive, Legislative, and Judicial, and the freedom of the press was guaranteed. The Constitution went into operation in Mexico, but failed of the desired effect. The Insurgents still continued under arms, various efficient leaders having sprung up after the death of Hidalgo.

The most prominent among them were Generals Rayon, Victoria, Guerrero, the Bravos, and the Priests Morelos and Meta-

mos. Morelos was taken prisoner a few years afterwards and shot; Victoria, Guerrero, and one of the Bravos' figure conspicuously in the later history of the country. A national Junta or Congress was formed by the revolutionists, and the independence of Mexico was declared by this body, on the 13th of November 1813, at Chilpanzingo, a town in the Province of Mexico. The basis of the Declaration was the acknowledgement of Ferdinand VII. as a king of the new Empire, provided he would assume the crown in person, and reside among his subjects. It is hardly necessary to say, that the proposition was not seriously entertained, by that Prince or his representatives. On his restoration to the throne in 1814, his first act was to annul the Constitution of 1812, but in 1819, he was forced to yield to the popular desire, and re-establish it. Its operation in Mexico was, on both occasions of its proclamation, altogether unfavorable to Spain, and encouraging to the hopes of the independent party. From 1813 to 1820, no important successes were gained by the insurgents. They were constantly in arms, however, traversing the country in small bands, but acting without concert and often probably with no higher motive than to rob and devastate. Several of their leaders were men of patriotic sentiments, who had the interests of their country at heart. The most prominent and upright among them, General Victoria, in 1818, abandoned the cause in disgust, and retired to the mountains, where he remained until the revolution of 1821, leading a life of privation and solitude, without ever seeing a human face, or approaching a human habitation. In 1816 the revolutionists were strengthened by the accession of General Mina, a young Spanish liberal, who had been obliged to leave Spain on account of his share in the late wars of the Peninsula, and who, on his way, took with him a body of about four hundred adventurers from the United States. His successes, however, were of short duration, as in a few months

after his landing, he was taken and shot.

The exertions of a new Viceroy, Apodaca, who had been appointed in 1816, had restored the country to a state of comparative tranquility, when in 1820 the Spanish Constitution was a second time promulgated.

The effect of the new elections under it was even more disastrous to the government than before. The Viceroy saw his danger, and determined to hazard the bold step of restoring the absolute authority of his sovereign, as it existed before the Constitution. In this measure he was supported by the Clergy, who are rarely favorable to the extension of popular privileges, and whose extraordinary immunities had been somewhat abridged by the action of the Spanish Cortes. The Spanish forces in the country did not amount to more than five hundred troops, the most efficient corps of the royal army, being the native troops under the command of Colonel Augustine Iturbide.

This officer had taken a very prominent part in the revolution, as one of the royalist leaders, ever since the time of Hidalgo. He was a native of the country, young and enthusiastic, and possessing more influence over his countrymen, than any person in the employ of the government. For some cause, which is not explained, he had been suspended from his command in 1816, and remained in private life, until recalled by Apodaca in 1820. It is said that in the interval he was in correspondence with the revolutionists, who held out great inducements to him to join their ranks. However this may have been, it is certain that he took every occasion to extend his influence with the common people, and the Clergy, with whom he was already a favorite. On his recall to the army in February, 1821, the Viceroy entrusted him with the command of the Expedition against the patriot general, Guerrero, in the South. A favorable opportunity was thus presented, for carrying into effect the ambitious schemes which he had, doubtless, long cherished. Before proceeding far upon his expedition, and

without meeting the enemy, he proposed to his officers a plan for the future government of Mexico, which has been since known as the 'Plan of Iguala,' from the name of the village where it was first promulgated. The basis of the plan was the three following propositions, viz :

1. 'That Mexico should form an independent empire, the crown of which should be offered to the king of Spain, and in the event of his refusal, to the other princes of his family in succession; upon condition that the person accepting it should reside in the country, and should swear to observe a constitution to be fixed by a Congress.'

2. 'That the Roman Catholic religion should be supported, and the rights, immunities, and property of its clergy should be preserved and secured.'

3. 'That all the actual inhabitants of Mexico, whatever might be their birth-place or descent, should enjoy the same civil rights.'

These propositions, which were entitled the 'Three Guaranties,' met with an enthusiastic reception from the army, which immediately assumed the name of 'the army of the Three Guaranties.' The insurgents readily fell into the plan of Iturbide, which was, in fact, substantially the same as that proposed by their own Junta, several years before. His army was swelled by the accession of Guerrero and his followers; and the self-exiled Victoria came down from his mountains, to add his powerful influence to a cause which had received so great an impetus. Col. Bustamente, twice since a President of the Republic, pronounced in its favor, with his regiment at San Luis Potosi; and Santa Anna, at this time a young officer, and who now for the first time appears upon the stage, did the same at Vera Cruz. The enthusiasm was general, and the Spanish party was powerless to oppose it. At this juncture Apodaca was superceded by the appointment of General O'Donoju, with the title of 'Captain General.' Finding it utterly impossible to stem the popular tide, the new

governor entered into a convention with Iturbide on the 24th of August, at Cordova, a town in the province of Vera Cruz. The result of this meeting was a treaty, by which the Spanish representative acknowledged the Independence of Mexico, on the basis of the 'Plan of Iguala.' In pursuance thereof, Commissioners were sent to Spain, to announce the treaty to Ferdinand VII., and request his acceptance of the throne. A regency was meanwhile appointed, with Iturbide at its head, and a Cortes summoned to form a constitution. The army still remained in command of Iturbide, who now united in his own person, the highest civil and military functions. The Cortes, or *Congress*, as it was usually called after this time, met in February, 1822, and the members were severally sworn to support the 'Plan of Iguala.' There was, however, a great division of sentiment among them, and they soon settled down into three parties; the *Republicans*, who favored a form of government, like that of the United States; the *Bourbonists*, who were for carrying out the Plan of Iguala literally, and seating a Bourbon prince upon the throne; and the *Iturbidists*, who were for bestowing the crown of the new empire upon their favorite general.

The Plan of Iguala and treaty of Cordova, had meantime been received in Spain, and met with the rejection, which had doubtless been anticipated. The treaty was declared void, and energetic measures, which a total want of resources did not permit them to execute, threatened.

The rejection of their proposals added great strength to the party of Iturbide, and he was, on the 18th of May, 1822, pronounced Emperor by the acclamations of the people, with the title of *Augustine First*. The Congress ratified the popular choice, but the leaders of the revolution, Bravo, Guerrero and Victoria, withdrew with their partizans in discontent. Santa Anna alone sided with the new Emperor. But his reign was not destined to be of long or tranquil

duration. There is some disagreement as to the causes which led to its downfall. Certain it is, that Iturbide soon quarrelled with his Congress and principal ministers. That he had good reason to suspect their fidelity to himself, is highly probable. For some reason of this sort, Santa Anna was suspended in his command at Vera Cruz, and ordered to appear at the capital. Instead of obeying the order, he placed himself at the head of his garrison, and pronounced against the Emperor, in favor of a republican government. He was soon joined by Victoria, and even persuaded Echavarri, the imperial general sent out by Iturbide to oppose him, to turn traitor to his master. Thus strengthened, he promulgated a new plan of government, on the 2d February, 1823, entitled the 'Act of Casas Matas.' The principal provisions of this act were the dethronement of Iturbide, and the establishment of a Republic. Iturbide almost immediately abdicated the throne, which he had occupied but 10 months. An ample annuity was granted him, on condition of his residing in a foreign land. During the spring he set sail for Italy, where he remained less than a year, and then returned secretly to Mexico, with the hope of again gaining the ascendancy. It is not improbable that his friends might have rallied successfully in his favor, had he been able to make his appearance among them; but he had landed in a distant part of the republic, and having incautiously thrown off his 'incognito,' he was arrested by the provincial authorities, and in pursuance of a decree passed in his absence, shot as an outlaw.

Thus ended the career of one of the most remarkable men whom Mexico has produced. Two men stand pre-eminent in Mexican history during the last forty years.—Iturbide and Santa Anna. The career of the one was short and brilliant; as he met his death before the age of forty; the other has continued to be the hero of his country's revolutions. Augustine Iturbide was born in the city of Valladolid, in the western part of Mexico,

of good Spanish family. His education was the best which the country afforded. He entered the army when scarcely more than twenty years old, and from the first manifested uncommon abilities. No man was more depended on by the government in the early contest with the insurgents; and none possessed so much the confidence of the people. He has been usually represented as ambitious and selfish, but a recent writer, who has had access to his private papers and correspondence, pronounces him pure minded and patriotic. It is impossible to read motives with unerring certainty, when men are placed in circumstances like his; the actor himself may be deceived in them. It is not necessary to suppose a mal-administration of the government, to account for his downfall. The support which he received from the patriot generals could never have been hearty; more especially when they foresaw the height to which his ambition and popularity would carry him. He had joined their ranks but a few months before his elevation to the throne, while Victoria, Bravo, and Guerrero had been among the earliest supporters of the cause. The people, also, must have felt the difference between a favorite general and companion and an imperial master. By their own act they had placed him at an immeasurable distance from them; and they were naturally the first to evince the alienation which that distance occasioned. It can be said of him with safety, that he was at least as patriotic as most of those who have succeeded him in authority. It may be a matter of interest to mention, that his widow and family have resided, for many years, in Philadelphia.

After the abdication of Iturbide, the government was placed in a commission, until the plan of it should be definitively settled. This was not done until the October of the following year, 1824, when a federal constitution was finally adopted. This was modeled from the constitution of the United States, but differed from it in one or two im-

portant particulars; as for example, in the absence of trial by jury and in the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion. To a citizen of the United States these differences seem all essential. Trial by jury or the right to it, is doubtless one of the bulwarks of our liberty, though its practical utility, in all cases, has probably been over-estimated; and in a state of society constituted like that of Mexico, it would be an institution of very doubtful utility. As to the establishment of the Catholic religion, the want of any dissenters made it prejudicial to no one; and the vast influence and wealth of the clergy, and the ignorance and superstition of the people, made its establishment essential to the permanence of any government which might be formed. On the whole, it may be doubted, whether in the formation of a new constitution, they did not adhere far more strictly to their model, than the state of the country justified. Wide as have been the departures however from the federal constitution, it has ever remained the favorite of the Mexican people. They were stimulated by the example of the United States, and have looked upon federalism as a panacea which should heal all their disorders. The revolt of Texas, and the increasing defection of other remote provinces of the republic, have all grown out of the violation of this constitution. The popular cry of every general or party who would get into power, has been 'Federalism' and the 'Constitution of '24.' Santa Anna even talked of it on his late return from Havana. The first President elected for the Republic was General Victoria, whose name has already been frequently mentioned. Though uneducated, and, as a statesman, far inferior to many who had taken part in the revolution, he was a true patriot and an honest man. No man has acted so consistently, and with so little selfishness, throughout the whole career of the Republic. The Vice President was Gen. Bravo, an unfortunate choice, as he had long been the rival of Victoria, and brought no hearty sup-

port to his government. Before his term of service had expired, he even took arms and engaged in open hostility against the President. It seems to us a singular thing, to see a President and Vice President holding opposite opinions and heading opposite factions; but this inconsistently arises in part from the mode in which these officers are elected, and has since been by no means an unusual spectacle.

In the year 1825, the Independence of Mexico was recognized by Great Britain and the United States; and Mr. Poinsett, who had previously acted in the capacity of Commissioner in negotiating with the Republics of South America, was the first minister appointed by our government.

The second election for President took place in 1828, and was, in many respects, the fiercest political struggle which that country has ever witnessed. There were at that time two well defined parties. An unusual element entered into their disputes,—‘masonry.’ There are, it would seem, two parties in the masonic fraternity, the Scotch party and the York party; differing from each other in their doctrines and ceremonies. Lodges of the Scotch party had existed for several years in Mexico, and on the arrival of Mr. Poinsett, at the solicitation of many influential persons in the Republic, he procured a charter for a lodge of the York order, from the officers of the Fraternity in the United States. The Scotch party, or the ‘*Escoceses*,’ as they were called, held political sentiments similar to those of English *Tories*. The York party or ‘*Yorkinos*,’ sentiments corresponding to those of English *Whigs*. The candidate of the *Escoceses* was Gen. Gomez Pedraza, who was elected, by a small majority over Gen. Guerrero, the candidate of the *Yorkinos* or Liberals. Before Pedraza had taken his seat, however, the defeated party pronounced and took arms against him, declaring that his election had been procured by fraud. At the head of this movement was Santa Anna, who shortly before had been

suspended from his command at Vera Cruz, and who thought the present a favorable opportunity for revenging himself on the government, which was of the same political sentiments with Pedraza. After the few days of turmoil and bloodshed which usually succeed a Mexican ‘*pronunciamento*,’ a new election was procured, which resulted in favor of Guerrero. Don Anastasio Bustamente was elected Vice President, and Pedraza banished to the United States.

In 1829, Spain made a final effort to recover her lost dominion in Mexico, and despatched an army from Cuba, under Gen. Barradas. This force landed at Tampico, and were met in that neighborhood by the republican army under Santa Anna. The Spanish forces were entirely defeated. The tide of popularity now set strongly in favor of Santa Anna; and as there must always be a counterpart to every hero, a corresponding degree of censure was visited upon Guerrero. For once, Santa Anna was inactive. A new ‘*revolution*’ was set on foot, headed by Bustamente, the Vice President. Guerrero was forced to resign, and Bustamente assumed the chair of state. Thus it will be seen, that rotation in office, is not only a principle in the Mexican republic, but a practice, which her leading statesmen are careful shall not fall into disuse. Guerrero, the unfortunate victim of this revolution, attempted to escape from the country, but was arrested on ship-board by the emissaries of the government, and after the form of a court martial, shot; a summary mode of executing justice, which has always been fashionable among his countrymen. Santa Anna remained in retirement on his estate near Vera Cruz, until 1832, when becoming weary of that idle life, he pronounced against the government of Bustamente. The result of this revolution was certainly a singular one, and not very creditable to the motives or consistency of Santa Anna. The election of Pedraza in 1828, which he was mainly instrumental in overturning, was declared to have been legal, and

Bustamente was obliged to leave his office and the country. Pedraza was recalled and duly reinstated. Little however remained of his term; and his recall was merely to serve the purposes of the wily general, by whose instrumentality it was effected. Santa Anna well knew the influence which an existing administration may exercise in favor of its successor, and this influence was thus secured towards effecting his own election, which took place in March, 1833. Gomez Farias was, at the same time, elected Vice President. Just 14 years elapsed, and the parties again occupied the same relative positions; a singular illustration of the doctrine of chances; for hardly anything else can be said to govern the mutations in Mexican politics. Santa Anna had of late shown considerable disinclination to follow out the principles of the Federal Constitution. It imposed too many restrictions upon the action of one who would have the state governed by his own supreme will. On this, as on many other subjects, he was at issue with Farias, who was and ever has been a firm supporter of Federalism. The Congress were, unfortunately for the General, by a large majority, of the same sentiments with the Vice President, and Santa Anna was under the necessity of dissolving that body, as Cromwell dissolved the Long Parliament. At the same time he pronounced against the Vice President in favor of himself, and a new form of government, which has since been known as the 'Central System.' As in most of his projects, he was successful in this. Farias was banished, and for several years resided at New Orleans.

The Central government differed in many essential particulars from the Federal, which it superseded. The representation of the departments were not abolished, but they were no longer permitted to hold legislative assemblies. The tenure of the presidential office was lengthened to 8 years, and enlarged powers were bestowed upon the Chief Magistrate. The details of the new system are extremely intricate, and as it has since been overturned,

it is hardly worth while to explain them. The revolt of Texas was one of the revolutions which grew out of the new change in the domestic relations of the States. The most important event of this war, (as it regards the thread of the present narrative,) was the capture and imprisonment of Santa Anna. After his release, he visited the United States, and had an interview with General Jackson, relative to the affairs of the new republic. Before his release, together with the principal officers of his army, he had entered into a treaty with the Texians, by which the Independence of Texas was recognized. This treaty—which has been a bone of contention in the discussions in this country relative to the annexation of Texas and the present war—he repudiated on his return home, on the plea of duress, and the Mexican Congress did the same on the ground of a want of authority in the contracting parties.

During Santa Anna's absence, Bustamente took the opportunity to return to Mexico, and excited a revolution, by which the provisional government was overturned, and he himself elected President. This office he held until 1841, when a combination was formed against him, headed by Generals Valencia, Paredes and Santa Anna. The result was the 'Plan of Tacubaya,' which nominated a provisional government, with Santa Anna at its head, until a new constitution should be framed. Meanwhile had occurred the attack by the French on Vera Cruz in 1839—in which Santa Anna guided the Mexican army with energy and success. During this contest he lost his leg, and regained his military reputation, of which the Texians had deprived him. The powers conferred upon him under the Plan of Tacubaya, he construed as 'dictatorial,' and for nearly two years he governed the republic as dictator, until in 1844 the new constitution was formed, and he resigned his dictatorship only to be again elected President. But with all his diplomacy, he could not chain the inconstant hearts of the Mexican people. It was

complained of him that he wanted energy in prosecuting the war against Texas; and this was made a pretext for a new revolution, headed by Paredes. While Santa Anna was absent from the Capital endeavoring to suppress this outbreak, a third faction succeeded in raising Gen. Herrera to the presidential chair, and in procuring a decree by which Santa Anna was banished from the Republic for ten years. On leaving Mexico, in pursuance of this sentence, he took up his residence at Havana, from whence he could easily correspond with his partizans in his own country, and where he could be at hand in case of any favorable turn in affairs.

Since 1845, a revolution has supplanted Herrera, and raised Paredes to the Executive office; and he in turn has given place to Gomez Farias. The present war with our country afforded Santa Anna the occasion to return to Mexico; and his countrymen, considering him their most able leader, made him Commander-in-Chief of their armies and President of the republic. Having remained about nine months at the head of affairs, his want of success in opposing the American armies lost him the favor of his countrymen, and he has resigned the presidential office, and, it is said, is a second time succeeded by Herrera. Such is the position of affairs at the present writing, but what changes the next arrival may report it is impossible to divine.

The *Constitution* by which the country was till recently governed, is that of a central or consolidated republic. It was proclaimed on the 13th of June, 1843, and is a modification of the constitution of 1836.

This instrument declares that the political power essentially resides in the *Nation*, and that Mexico adopts a popular representative system for its government; it recognizes and protects the Roman Catholic religion, to the exclusion of all others; it prohibits slavery, and guarantees civil and political rights to all the citizens of the republic, without distinction of race or color; by its provisions

the right of suffrage, and of filling various offices, is considerably restricted by property qualifications and other requirements; and after the year 1850, no one will be allowed to vote *unless he can read and write*; certainly a very reasonable and necessary qualification for a good republican.

The latest information is, that on the 21st of May, 1847, a new constitution was adopted, founded on that of 1824; consequently more liberal in its provisions in regard to the rights and separate independence of the States. This measure was doubtless designed to conciliate the different departments, and more effectually to secure the co-operation of the several States in prosecuting the war in which they are engaged.

Such is a brief but complete outline of the history of Mexico during the Spanish dominion, and its existence as an independent nation.

In taking a retrospective view of the history of Mexico during its independence, we find but little encouragement to hope that country will, for a long time, succeed in a republican form of government. Doubtless the surest and speediest way to become qualified for freedom, is to enjoy the rights and exercise the functions of freemen. But in their school of liberty, the Mexicans have made no hopeful progress. They have made a laudable endeavor to imitate the political institutions of the United States, but the attempt thus far has been a signal failure. The nation does not possess the same elements for free government as the Northern republic. The Anglo-Saxon is a law-loving and law-abiding race. Having established the best form of government, they are content to enjoy its blessings and devote their time and energies to the physical and intellectual improvements which become an enlightened nation; and while the Mexicans have wasted the life of an entire generation in forming and abolishing constitutions, and tampering with its political machinery, the United States, blessed with peace and stabil

ity of government, have been astonishing the world by their increasing prosperity and power.

The following parallel between Mexico and Massachusetts occurs in the 'Recollections of Mexico,' and penned, as it was, by a South Carolinian, it is not a little flattering to the old Bay State:

'A new and very handsome custom house has just been completed on the mole at Vera Cruz. The material of which it is built is brought from Quincy, in Massachusetts, although there is stone equally as good within ten miles of Vera Cruz; a fact strikingly illustrative of the character of the people in the two countries. Such comparisons, or rather contrasts are constantly presented to the American travelling in Mexico.

Mexico was colonised just one hundred years before Massachusetts. Her first settlers were the noblest spirit of Spain in her Augustan age, the epoch of Cervantes, Cortez, Pizarro, Columbus, Gonzalvo de Cordova, Cardinal Ximenes, and the great and good Isabella. Massachusetts was settled by the poor Pilgrims of Plymouth, who carried with them nothing but their own hardy virtues, and indomitable energy. Mexico, with a rich soil, and a climate adapted to every thing that grows out of the earth, and possessing every metal used by man. Massachusetts, with a sterile soil and ungenial climate, and no single article for exportation but ice and rock. How have these blessings, profusely given by Providence, been improved on the one hand and obstacles overcome on the other? What is now the respective condition of the two countries? In productive industry, wide-spread diffusion of knowledge, public institutions of every kind, general happiness and continually increasing prosperity; in letters, arts, morals, religion; in every thing which makes a people great, there is not in the world, and there never was in the world, such a commonwealth as Massachusetts. "There she is! look at her!"—and Mexico.'

The condition of Mexico since it threw off the Spanish authority is in many respects worse than before. Their independence has indeed given them more self-reliance, and brought out numbers of prominent men, but the body of the people have been in a worse condition, than under the greater stability of the colonial government. The standard of public morals has deteriorated; there is less security for life and property; fraud and speculation, in high places, have increased; the product of the mines has fallen off; towns and cities, once populous and flourishing, have dwindled in importance; valuable estates have been left to decay; robbers and murderers are abroad, and revolution is the order of the day. These revolutions have become nearly as much a matter of course as thunder showers in sultry weather, and so frequent are they, that the mode of proceeding is reduced to something of the regularity of a programme. M. Chevalier, a French traveller in Mexico in 1835, thus speaks of the state of things at that time, and it has not materially improved since:

'I have only been two months in Mexico, and already I have witnessed four attempts at revolution. Insurrections have become quite ordinary occurrences here, and their settled forms been gradually established, from which it is not considered fair to deviate. These seem almost as positively fixed as the laws of backgammon or the recipes of domestic cookery. The first act of a revolution is called a *pronunciamento*. An officer of any rank, from a general down to a lieutenant, *pronounces* himself against the established order, or against an institution which displeases him, or against anything else. He gets together a detachment, a company, or a regiment, as the case may be, and these generally, without more ado, place themselves at his disposal. The second act is called the *grito*, or outcry, when two or three articles are drawn up to state the motives or objects of the insurrection. If the matter is of some importance the outcry is called a *plan*. At

the third act, the insurgents and the partisans of the government are drawn up in front of one another, and mutually examine each other's forces. At the fourth act they come to blows; but, according to the improved system of late introduced, the fighting is carried on in a very distant, moderate, and respectful manner. However, one party is declared victor, and the beaten party *dispronounce*. The conquerors march to Mexico, and their triumphal entry into the capital constitutes the fifth act of the play; the vanquish leader meanwhile embarks at Vera Cruz or Tampico with all the honors of war.'

It is a curious fact that there were three Mexican Presidents in banishment at one time. When Santa Anna went to Cuba, he met Bustamante, whom he had deposed in 1842, and had he gone by the way of New Orleans, he might have shaken hands with Farias, and perhaps received a little consolation from his former Vice President, against whom he had *pronounced*. Paredes is now in Exile, enjoying a European tour. It is good policy for the Mexicans to send their public men abroad to improve their manners and their knowledge of the governments of other nations. They always return wiser than they went. Santa Anna's tour through the United States by the way of *Texas* was of essential benefit to him; he learned something of American character, and has been more humane and gentlemanly since.

In general, the armies alone engage in these commotions. For the want of something else to do, and a little excitement, and having nothing to lose, and perhaps a prospect of gaining something, they readily seconded the movements of their leaders. From the frequency of these outbreaks, the people generally have become quite indifferent to them. Even when the scene of action is in the capital, they show no signs of panic.—They quietly close their shops, lounge about the streets, where the cannons are not playing, and with folded arms and smoking

their cigars, they coolly wait till one party declare themselves victors and take possession of the government.

In looking for the causes which have prevented the success of the Mexicans in maintaining a republican form of government, several facts presents themselves. It seems the fate of the Spaniards everywhere to be a mixed race. It might startle some, to be told that in colonizing the two countries the conduct of the blood stained conqueror of Mexico and his rapacious followers, was in any particular more humane and christian than that of the Pilgrims and their descendants.—But while the Anglo-Saxons have driven the Indian race before them, and are fast exterminating them from the land, the Spaniards went among the native inhabitants, mingled freely with them, weaned them from their idolatry, imparted to them civilization, and nominally at least, converted them to christianity. They shared with the original proprietors the lands of their fathers, and shared with them their homes and their firesides.—The young widow of Guatimozin became the wife of a Spanish officer in the army of Cortez. The lovely daughters of Montezuma married into Castilian families of noble blood.

But this partnership with the native race, has been, and will continue to be, exceedingly unfavorable to all schemes of self-government. The Indian race are slow in adopting the customs and habits, and imbibing the principles of enlightened nations. The change from the absolute sway of Montezuma to the despotism of the Viceroy was not very great, but to ascend from the latter to Republicanism, was to attain a height that made the simple and dependant native altogether giddy and unstable. The Indian and mixt population comprising perhaps three fourths of the whole, the political virtue of the Spanish portion of the republic was not sufficient to save it. In deed from the Spanish race itself the most hopeful things are not to be expected, as regards permanency of political institutions. Spain itself, the pop-

ulous hive of the colonies of the New World, has suffered a degree of anarchy and misrule that could not have been found in the darkest nook of the empire of Montezuma. The Spanish American governments have, without exception, experienced a similar fate. It is, however, sincerely to be hoped that these constitutional tendencies, and natural difficulties may be overcome in Mexico, and that in due time it may become a well governed and prosperous republic.

As we contemplate the history of the republics that have been, and the condition of those that now exist, we have cause for the deepest gratitude to that Providence who has granted to us success and prosperity, in such a wonderful degree; and warned by the disasters that have overtaken others, we should guard against the causes that have led to them, and endeavor to transmit unimpaired those institutions which have been to us a richer inheritance than mines of silver and gold.

CHAPTER IV.

TEXAS—ITS REVOLUTION—SANTA ANNA.

Early History. Grant of Land by Spain to Moses Austin. Colonized by citizens of the United States. Texas a State of the Mexican Republic. Causes of Difficulties. Commencement of the War. Number of Inhabitants at the time. Change of Government in Mexico. Texians Protest. Campaign of 1835. Santa Anna Invades the Country.—Texians declare their Independence. Mexicans take San Antonio. Fall of the Alamo. Affairs at Goliad. Colonel Fanning's Command Taken and four hundred Prisoners Shot. Progress of the Mexican Army. Texians Rally. General Houston advances to meet Santa Anna. Battle of San Jacinto, and total Defeat of the Mexicans. Santa Anna a Prisoner. Continuation of the War. Annexation. Remarks on Texian Affairs. Biographical Sketch of Santa Anna—Personal Appearance—His Education—Anecdotes of his Gratitude and Humanity. Release of Texian Prisoners—Their Treatment by the Mexicans. The boy John Hill released and adopted by Santa Anna. Prisoners of Perote. Santa Anna's love of Cock-fighting—Loss of his Leg and its Consequences. Santa Anna during the present War with this Country.

As the history of Texas is interwoven with that of Mexico, as well as of our own country, and the present war between the two Republics has grown out of difficulties relating to this territory, a notice of its settlement and subsequent affairs will here be given.

This is a new country and nation, and until within a few years almost unknown to the geography and history of the world. Previously to 1690, it formed a remote and merely nominal part of the conquests of Cortez, inhabited almost wholly by predatory Indian tribes, but in that year the Spaniards, having driven out a colony of French who had established themselves at Matagorda,

made their first permanent settlement at San Francisco. For more than a century little was done towards colonizing the territory, and in 1821 the only settlements were the Spanish ports, and military posts of San Antonio de Bexar, Bahia or Goliad, and Nacogdoches, comprising in all about 3000 inhabitants.

By the treaty of 1816, between the United States and Spain, the River Sabine was adopted as the line of boundary between the two Powers. The country being thus confirmed to Spain by treaty, applications were made to the Spanish government for grants of land; and such grants were made to Euro-

peans and citizens of the United States, before the separation of Mexico from Spain, and were afterwards confirmed by the Mexican government. In 1821, Moses Austin, a citizen of the United States, obtained a grant of a tract about one hundred miles in breadth, on the coast, between, and east and west of the Brazos and Colorado rivers, and one hundred and fifty into the interior, upon which he was to introduce three hundred families, each to have a specified portion.—The elder Austin dying, his son, Stephen Austin, carried out the enterprise; and thus commenced the occupation of Texas by our countrymen. Encouraged by the inducements held out, and attracted by the mild climate and fertile soil, emigrants from Europe and the United States, but mostly from the latter, continued to enter the country and settle on the uncultivated lands.

After the Independence of Mexico, at the formation of the Federal Republic in 1824, Texas was united with the adjoining department, forming the State Coahuila and Texas; the latter to become a separate State when the number of its population should be sufficient.

As might have been anticipated, this settlement of a portion of the Mexican territory by a race different in language, religion and education, soon began to give rise to serious difficulties. Another cause of trouble not very creditable to our own countrymen, was the fact that they introduced and continued the system of slavery, in a country whose constitution proclaimed all to be free.

For these and other causes, the Mexican government began to look with jealousy and distrust upon the distant and flourishing State of Texas; and in 1832, military posts and garrisons were stationed in some of the principal places. This course on the part of the government, with some acts of aggression committed by the soldiers, aroused the Texans, and a small body attacked the Mexican garrisons, and drove them from the State.

The Mexican government being at this

time in a distracted state, no immediate attention was paid to this opposition to the constituted authorities. In 1833, Texas having a population of about thirty thousand Americans, and perhaps ten thousand Europeans and Mexicans, all making a number which they considered sufficient for the purpose, a convention assembled and drew up a petition to the government to be erected into a separate State of the Mexican confederacy. Mr. Austin was sent to Mexico with the petition, but the National Congress being deeply engaged in various projects of reform under the new president Santa Anna, who had recently came into power, did not attend to the petition. Mr. Austin having waited some months to obtain a hearing, abandoned the hope of succeeding at that time, and having addressed a letter to the municipal authorities at San Antonio, advising the call of a convention to organize a state government, he started for home. His letter was however intercepted, and he was arrested on his way for treason, and thrown into prison at Saltillo, where he remained some months.

Santa Anna, doubtless considering a more consolidated and efficient government necessary, to preserve tranquility among the ignorant masses which compose the nation, procured the adoption of the Central, in place of the Federal form of government. As this abolished the State legislatures and only left to the departments a responsible Assembly, and the right of representation in the general Congress, Texas and some of the other States protested against the change of government. The other States were brought into the measure by negotiation or threats, excepting Zacatecas, which still held out. The state was declared to be in rebellion against the government, and the President, Santa Anna, at the head of an army marched against them in May 1835, and, defeating their forces in a bloody battle, reduced the State to subjection.

In October following, a Mexican force

under General Cos, invaded Texas, to reduce the people to submission to the government. The Texians had expressed their willingness to remain in the confederacy, provided the constitution of 1824 was adhered to, and in accordance with its provisions, they should be permitted to form a separate State; but as the government was not disposed to use any other than forcible measures, the colonists rallied and met them on their own terms. After a succession of brilliant achievements, among which were the taking of the ancient and strong fort at Goliad, and the Alamo or fortress of San Antonio, the Texians closed the campaign of 1835, without leaving a single Mexican post within their borders.

On the second of March, 1836, the Texians declared their independence, and pledged their lives, property and sacred honor to maintain it.

Meantime these events caused great excitement in the capital; and the government foreseeing the probability of the secession of Texas, and doubtless aware that this would lead to further losses of territory on the north, prepared for the most vigorous measures; and the President, Santa Anna, resolved to lead the army, in person, against the revolted province.

On account of the favorable termination of the previous campaign, the Texians had in a measure relaxed their vigilance; the citizen soldiers had returned to their employments; and the forts of San Antonio and Goliad were left under garrisons of the volunteers from the United States. The whole Texian force at the time in the field, it is said did not exceed five hundred men. They had just commenced forming their government and everything was in an unsettled state, when the whole country was startled by the announcement that Santa Anna was upon their western borders with an army of 8000 men. The invading army entered Texas in two divisions; the right, commanded by General Urrea, was following along the coast, and advancing upon Goliad, while the

left commanded by Santa Anna in person, was marching upon San Antonio by an interior route. The little garrison of the fortress at this place consisted of 150 men, under the command of Colonel Travis. They were summoned to surrender, but answered with a cannon shot from the walls. They maintained themselves for several days against 4000 Mexicans, with great destruction of the assailants, but the fort was taken, March the 6th, and they were cut off, to a man.

While these things were passing at San Antonio, General Urrea, with the Southern division of the Mexican army, was sweeping everything before him in that quarter. Colonel Fanning at the head of a garrison of about 400 men at Goliad, hearing of the advance of the enemy three or four thousand strong, and not being prepared to maintain a siege, burnt the town, abandoned the fort and commenced his retreat. He had not proceeded more than half a day's march when the enemy came up with him, and nearly surrounded his little army. He formed his troops into a hollow square, with their baggage for breast-works, and maintained his position during the day. His nine pieces of artillery, loaded with grape shot and musket balls made great havoc among the enemy as they charged upon him, 900 of them, it is said, having fallen in the battle. But he being wounded and many of his men killed, and knowing that they could not long hold out against superior numbers, he sent in a flag of truce, and articles of capitulation were drawn up and signed, by which the Texians 'were to be received and treated as prisoners of war, according to the usages of civilized nations.' Having given up their arms the Texians were marched back to Goliad and placed in the fort, March 21. Previous to Fanning's retreat from Goliad, a detachment of about 100 of his men, under Colonel Ward, the Georgia battalion, were sent out on an expedition about twenty-five miles, and being met by a large force of the Mexicans, they took a position in a church,

and with their death-dealing rifles defended themselves a whole day against all the attempts of the enemy to take them. It is said that they killed and wounded 400 of the enemy, without losing a man, and having only three severely wounded. They escaped from the church in the night, but were afterwards captured and taken prisoners to the fort, with the rest of Fanning's men. About the same time, Major Miller and ninety men who had just arrived on the coast from the United States, were also brought in prisoners, making the whole number in the fort at Goliad, about 400. To the men who surrendered under Colonel Fanning, about 240 in number, a written agreement had been made, for honorable treatment as prisoners of war. But in violation of this stipulation, and of every sentiment of humanity, and of the usages of civilized warfare, the whole body of prisoners were shot. The following is an extract of a letter written by a Mexican officer who, it would seem, was an unwilling actor in this dreadful tragedy.

'This day, Palm Sunday, March 27, has been to me a day of most heartfelt sorrow. At six in the morning, the execution of four hundred and twelve American prisoners was commenced, and continued till eight, when the last of the number was shot. At eleven commenced the operation of burning their bodies. But what an awful scene did the field present when the prisoners were executed and fell dead in heaps. And what spectator could view it without horror. They were all young, the oldest not more than thirty, and of fine florid complexions. When the unfortunate youths were brought to the place of death, their lamentations and the appeals which they uttered to Heaven in their own language, with extended arms, kneeling or prostrate on the earth, were such as might have caused the very stones to cry out in compassion.'

This act of barbarity; sanctioned by Santa Anna himself, though distant from the scene at the time, cannot of course be justified on any principles whatever; but for the sake of

our common humanity we would give the Mexicans the benefit of any palliating circumstances that the case admits. It is to be borne in mind then, that they were exasperated at the severe losses they had sustained, fifteen hundred of their men having fallen by the hands of the little garrisons of the Alamo and Goliad. To maintain possession of forts and churches, and without hope of continued successful resistance to cut down hundreds of their troops, they considered obstinacy and a wanton destruction of life. The Mexican government, as Santa Anna afterwards stated in his defence, had decreed that no prisoners should be made if found resisting; and therefore if there was cruelty it must be charged upon the government and not on its minister; he stated that the Mexicans were severely suffering for want of food for themselves, and the prisoners were armed with secret weapons which they refused to give up, and showed constant signs of revolt, and being guarded only by a few hundred soldiers, there were fears that they would rise upon the guard. The Mexicans were moreover greatly exasperated to find that most of the prisoners were citizens of the United States; one company of ninety was taken, freshly landed at the port of Copano. Influenced by these motives, and excited by the stirring events of an important campaign, a deed was permitted, which, if we may judge from his subsequent acts and assertions, no one has more regretted than Santa Anna himself.

While these things were transpiring in the western portion of the State, news of the invaders having advanced upon San Antonio and Goliad, reached the town of Washington, where the convention for framing a constitution was then in session. General Houston—who had been appointed to the chief command—immediately issued his proclamation, stating that 'the services of all were forthwith required in the field.' Rallying a force of five hundred men, he marched to the relief of the garrisons; but arriving at Gonzales, and learning of the fall of the

Alamo and the surrender of Fanning, and that the Mexicans were approaching with an overwhelming force, he retreated to the river Brazos. In their progress eastward, the southern division of the invading army crossed the Brazos at Brazoria, that under Santa Anna at San Felipe, on the way to the town of Harrisburg, where the convention was then in session, Santa Anna, hoping, doubtless, to seize the members of this body. The Texian General having learned by his scouts that the force under Santa Anna was by no means so large as had been reported, broke up his encampment on the Brazos, and having marched fifty miles in two days, arrived at the river San Jacinto. A courier despatched by the Mexican General to the other division of his army, being seized and brought into the Texian camp, General Houston learned the precise number of the force under Santa Anna and his intended line of march; and the number of the enemy not being more than double his own, he resolved to give him battle before he should have time to receive reinforcements. According to Houston's official report, the number of his men was 783, that of the enemy above 1500. The Texians having crossed Buffalo Bayou, met the Mexican army just below the confluence of this stream with the San Jacinto, on the 21st of April, 1836. The armies were drawn up and disposed to the best advantage on both sides, a portion of Santa Anna's being defended by a fortification constructed of packs and baggage. The fight commenced by cannonading, manœuvring of cavalry and occasional discharges of fire-arms. The Mexicans behaved with great coolness and bravery for a time, but the Texians advancing, their rifles carried death among the Mexicans, and the artillery discharging grape and cannister, made breaches in their ranks; at length the Texians rang the war-cry '*Remember the Alamo*,' and rushed upon the Mexican lines; for the want of bayonets, using their rifles as war-clubs, and wielding their dirks and bowie knives with such dead-

ly effect that the Mexicans were panic-stricken, and the contest became rather a massacre than a fight.

The victory was complete. According to the report alluded to, the loss of the Texians was two killed and twenty-three wounded, six of them mortally. The loss of the Mexicans was 630 killed, 208 wounded, 730 prisoners, among whom was the President, General Santa Anna with his officers. Besides muskets, baggage and cannon, several hundred horses and mules, and near twelve thousand dollars in specie fell into the hands of the victors. This battle secured the independence of the country. Santa Anna was released, on condition of sending the remainder of his army home, no more to take up arms against the country, and acknowledging the independence of Texas. This treaty, as has been stated, was disavowed by the Mexican Congress, as according to the law of nations they had a right to, on the ground that Santa Anna was a prisoner at the time, and had he not been he was not authorized by the Mexican government to bind his country by any treaty whatever. Accordingly the war against Texas was continued, mostly in show and threats, till it became a war against our country. Something however in the way of naval warfare was carried on upon the Gulf, and occasional incursions were made upon the western borders, and in 1842-3 some two or three hundred prisoners were made in Texas and within the limits of Mexico, and carried to the capital.

Meantime the independence of Texas had been recognized by the United States, England, France, and Belgium; and thus acknowledged as an independent nation by the chief powers of the world, it applied and was admitted a member of the American Union.

Such is the history of Texas; a country which for a few years past has perhaps more than any other, engaged the attention of the civilized nations. Whatever of wrong may have entered into the motives or conduct of

those by whom Texas was colonized, and severed from the Mexican republic, the event itself seems to be one of those necessary changes in national affairs, which result from the progress of society, and the different qualities and characters of the different races of mankind.

Had the authorities of Spain and of Mexico duly appreciated the enterprising character and progressive career of the American people, they would have seen that the only way to prevent them from gaining the ascendancy in a portion of their country, was to exclude them instead of inviting them into it. But after the territory had become colonized by our people, its separation was as natural as that of Mexico from Spain, or of the American colonies from Great Britain, and the more necessary inasmuch as in the case of Texas and Mexico the people were different in race, language, education and religion. Which difference must have prevented all blending or harmonious union between the two portions of the republic.

Had the Mexicans, instead of consuming their energies in subverting their institutions and waging war upon each other, employed them in developing the vast resources of their country, in extending their commerce, in settling the distant provinces, in constructing railroads, and thus with bars of iron binding together the different sections of the country—had the church, instead of confirming the people in bigotry and intolerance and binding them in spiritual despotism, instilled into their minds those charitable sentiments which christianity inculcates, and imparted to them those principles of religious and political freedom which are essential to the independence and prosperity of a nation; and instead of hoarding the wealth of the country and living luxuriously upon it, had they employed it in educating and enlightening the people, Mexico would not have seen her provinces possessed and improved by her more liberal, enlightened and enterprising

neighbors of the North, nor had the humiliation of finding herself incapable of preventing internal feuds or repelling a few thousand invaders.

So far as primitive rights are concerned, Texas belonged to the Indian tribes who inhabited it. Cortez and his descendants had no other right to it than the Texians now have—that of conquest. And as the Mexicans had failed to reclaim the country from the condition of nature, it was, in the events of Providence, given over to a people who would rescue it from its state of barbarism; and now, instead of a wilderness occupied by buffaloes, wild horses, and wilder savage tribes, we see an extensive and fertile region flourishing in the hands of its new possessors.

The limits of the institution of slavery have unfortunately been extended, but this is a temporary evil. While not only the most enlightened nations of the earth are protesting against this relic of by-gone days, but such countries as Mexico and some of the South American States, and even the despot of Egypt have discarded it, it cannot be believed that any portion of our countrymen will long tolerate this unprofitable and degrading institution, or be willing to perpetuate this dark stain upon the reputation of our great and free public.

On the whole then, whatever different opinions may be entertained upon that exciting subject—Texian affairs, great good must result from the occupation of the country by the Anglo-Saxon race.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF SANTA ANNA.

As Santa Anna occupies so conspicuous a place in Mexican history, a further notice of his career and character will not be improper or uninteresting. He is said to be a native of Vera Cruz, of humble birth, and the architect of his own fortune. He is now about fifty-five years of age. He is about five feet ten inches high, with a finely proportioned

person. 'I do not know,' remarks Mr. Thompson, 'that I have ever seen a more striking, and finely formed head and face; there is scarcely a feature or a point in either that Spurzheim or Lavater would desire to change.' His complexion is of an olive shade; he has a dark and penetrating eye, and a modest and rather melancholy cast of countenance; but when powerfully excited his eye and countenance are full of fire and energy, having even a tiger-look, as some say.

He entered the army at an early age, and for a number of years held the command of the garrison, at Vera Cruz. His education, therefore, is principally one of experience, having been acquired in the barracks, the camp, and the council chamber. He is not free from a certain hereditary complaint which is common to the whole Spanish nation, and may be traced at least, as far back as the illustrious founder of Vera Cruz.—When the messengers of Montezuma came bringing presents, Cortez wished them to bring more gold, saying, 'the Spaniards were troubled with a disease of the heart for which gold dust was a specific.' On account of this constitutional infirmity, Santa Anna has looked well to the 'specific.' He owns an immense tract of country, extending nearly the whole distance between Vera Cruz and Jalapa, about seventy miles, and has, it is said, from forty to fifty thousand head of cattle.—He is represented as dignified and courteous. Madame Calderon, in speaking of his first appearance at the opera, after his appointment to the dictatorship in 1841, says: 'We met the great man *'en face*,' and he stopped and gave us a cordial recognition. Two years have made little change in him in appearance. He retains the same interesting, resigned, and rather melancholy expression; the same quiet voice, and grave, but agreeable manners; and surrounded by pompous officers, he alone looked quiet, gentlemanly and high bred.'

On account of the sanguinary character of the Texian campaign many have considered him a semi-barbarian, and a fit chieftain of

a half civilized nation. In a history of the Texian revolution, written by an honorable gentleman, Santa Anna is usually styled 'the Mexican Chief.' Educated as he has been in the school of war and civil strife, it would be strange if his conduct had been entirely free from acts of unreasonable severity, but that cruelty is not a marked trait of his disposition there is abundant proof.

To place the character of 'the Mexican Chief' in a more agreeable point of view, and to show that even the Mexicans 'are not entirely destitute of the better qualities of human nature, I shall here quote from the 'Recollections of Mexico,' by Hon. Waddy Thompson, our minister to that country in 1842-3.

'On the 16th of June, 1842, the Texian prisoners of the Santa Fe expedition were released by General Santa Anna, that being his birth-day or rather the anniversary of his saint (Saint Antonio,) which is the day kept by all Mexicans instead of their own birth-day. I knew that they were to be released on that day on the parade ground near the city, and fearing that the immense populace which would be assembled might offer them some violence, I went out knowing that my official station would protect me and might enable me to protect them. Never was fear more groundless or surprise more agreeable. Santa Anna reviewed on that occasion more than ten thousand troops, and there were not less than thirty or forty thousand other persons assembled in the field. When the order for their liberation was given it was received with acclamations and shouts by the Mexican troops, which extended through the whole vast concourse. The officers and others threw pieces of money to the Texians, and as they passed through the crowd, instead of jeers and insults, every Mexican had a word of kindness for them, running up to them and shaking hands, and exclaiming, 'amigo, amigo!' my friend, my friend! I saw one poor *lepero* pull off his blanket and offer it to a Texian who was rather more rag-

ged than he was himself. As they passed along the streets men and women would run out from their shops and offer them bread and other articles. Let it be remembered that these men had invaded their country, and that they had been sedulously taught to regard them as their born enemies, los Texanos (the Texans) having all the associations with a Mexican that the words los Moros, (the Moors) had with their Gothic ancestors. I could not refrain from asking myself whether if the people of any other country had invaded ours and been made prisoners, they would under like circumstances have passed through such a crowd not only without insult but with such demonstrations of kindness and sympathy. There were a few instances of atrocious barbarity practiced upon these prisoners upon the frontiers of Mexico, when they were first captured. But after they had advanced within fifteen hundred miles of the city the general treatment which they received was kind and respectful; I think there was no single exception to this remark whilst they were confined in the convent of Saint Jago near Mexico.

'They were some occurrences,' continues the author, 'which passed under my own eye, and for the truth of which I vouch, which will better illustrate the character of General Santa Anna than any general dissertation of mine, and which will be entitled to more consideration than my own individual opinion. When Santa Anna was a prisoner in Texas, he was put in chains. The proud spirit of a soldier and a Castilian could not bear this indignity, and he attempted to commit suicide by taking laudanum. He was relieved from its effects and otherwise kindly treated by Dr. Phelps, of Texas. On the arrival of the prisoners taken at Mier, Santa Anna ascertained that there was one whose name was Phelps. He sent for him, and asked him if he was related to Dr. Phelps, of Washington, Texas; when the young man replied that he was his son, Santa Anna ordered that he should be released, sent an aid-

de-camp with him into the city, and purchased two or three suits of clothes for him, and gave him a room in his palace. I was informed of all this, and as there was an American ship of war at Vera Cruz, about to start to the United States, I wrote a note to Santa Anna, offering young Phelps a passage. He replied, thanking me for the offer, but declined it, saying that he felt himself fortunate in having it in his power to return, in some degree, the kindness of Dr. Phelps to him, when he was a prisoner in Texas, and that he preferred sending his son home at his own expense; which he did, giving to him also a draft on his factor in Vera Cruz, for whatever sum of money he might ask for.

'Amongst the prisoners taken at Mier, was a very shrewd and handsome boy, of about fifteen years of age, John Hill. On their arrival in Mexico, this boy was not closely confined as the other prisoners were, and he came to see me, and requested that I would ask the President to release him. I told him to go himself, and I was sure that Santa Anna would be more apt to do it on his own account than on mine.

'A few days afterwards the little fellow returned to my house very handsomely dressed, and told me that he had been liberated, and gave me the following account of what had passed between himself and the President.—When he requested Santa Anna to release him, the latter replied, 'Why if I do, you will come back and fight me again. The Santa Fe prisoners were released on their parole of honor not to bear arms again against Mexico, and it was not three months before half of them had invaded the country again; and they tell me you killed several of my Mexicans at Mier.' The little fellow replied that he did not know how many he had killed, but that he had fired fifteen or twenty times during the battle. 'Very well,' said Santa Anna, 'I will release you, and what is more, I will adopt you as my son, and educate and provide for you as such.'

'The boy was adopted on a full footing

of equality in his family and treated with the most parental kindness. He was afterwards placed at the principal college in Mexico, where he was pursuing his education when I left the country. Gen. Santa Anna not only paid the charges of his education but in all respects cared for him as a son. Sometime after his own discharge, little Hill came to me to request that I would obtain the release of his father; I told him no, that he was a more successful negociator than I was, to go and try his own hand again. He did so, and obtained at once the release of his father, and afterwards of a brother who was also among the prisoners.

‘I might protract this narrative almost indefinitely by describing similar instances, but I will mention only one more, and it impressed me more favorably than any other, because it was the triumph of the better and more generous feelings and impulses of our nature, over the previously formed determination of calculating policy. At the period of my leaving Mexico, there were thirty-six Texians confined at the castle of Perote, who had been made prisoners by Gen. Wall at San Antonio in Texas in the fall of 1842. I was very anxious that they should be released, and with that view, stopped some days at Jalapa, as Santa Anna was daily expected at his beautiful country seat, the Encerro, five miles distant from that city. When I visited him he turned the conversation upon the purpose of the United States to annex Texas, and spoke freely but respectfully on the subject. It was not positively known then in Mexico that such a negotiation was on foot; at least I did not know it, perhaps Santa Anna did. I was not disposed to enter into any discussion with him, but his remarks at length became so strong that I could not be silent, and I replied to him with a good deal of warmth, and at the close of a short and pretty animated discussion, I said to him—‘What do you intend to do with the Texian prisoners? do you intend to keep them here always? ‘What else can I do, sir? if I release them on their pa-

role they will not respect it, and I gain nothing by making them prisoners, for they immediately take up arms again as did the prisoners of the Sante Fe expedition,’ and he added, ‘I was informed that you intend to ask the release of these prisoners; but I beg that you will not do it, for great as the pleasure would be to oblige you, my duty forbids it.’ I told him that he knew that I was not apt to abandon my purposes, and that I would ask it and what was more, that I knew he would release them. I added that the prisoners taken at San Antonio did not know that it was the Mexican army which was approaching, but supposed it was a band of robbers which was infesting the place; the Texians had all told me so. He replied: ‘I know they say so, but it is not true; Gen. Wall entered San Antonio with cannon and music, and any one knows that robber bands have neither.’—‘Well,’ said I, ‘if they did, they were defending their homes and hearths, and a gallant defence they made, and a generous enemy should respect them the more.’ ‘That,’ said he, ‘is putting the matter on a different footing. Are there any particular individual of the San Antonio prisoners whom you wish released?’ ‘Yes, there are.’ ‘Then,’ said he, ‘send me a list of their names to-morrow.’ ‘No I will give them to you now,’ I replied. ‘Very well,’ said he, ‘Who are they?’ I answered, ‘all of them. How can I distinguish between men, all strangers to me personally, whose cases are in all respects the same, and why should you?’ ‘Well,’ said he, with manifest emotion, ‘I have been advised not to do it, and had made up my mind that I would not, but you shall take them all with you.’

Thus at different times, as the same author remarks, Santa Anna, at his solicitation, released more than two hundred Texian prisoners; individuals too who had not only succeeded in severing a large and valuable tract from the republic, but who were, most of them taken while actually invading undisputed Mexican soil. It is pleasant to record such exhibitions of the kindlier emotions in

a quarter and under circumstances where we should hardly expect them.

Santa Anna possesses not only a humane and generous but even a playful disposition. He is very fond of amusements, particularly of cock-fighting, according to the custom of his country. 'When I first visited him at Encerro, to request the release of the prisoners,' says Mr. Thompson, 'he was examining his chicken cocks, having a large main then depending; he went round the coops and examined every fowl, and gave directions as to his feed; some to have a little more, others to be stinted. There was one of very great beauty, of the color of the partridge, only with feathers tipped with black instead of yellow or white; and the male in all respects like the female, except in size. He asked me if we had any such in our country, and when I told him that we had not, he said that if that one gained his fight he would send him to me,—he was the only one of fifteen which did not lose his fight; and shortly after my return, when I visited New York, I found the fowl there. I had thought no more about it, and I had no idea that he would. After examining his chicken cocks we returned to the house, and then he was all the President; and to have listened to his eloquent conversation (on matters of war and government) one would not have supposed that he had ever witnessed a cock-fight.'

When Santa Anna returned from his Texas expedition, deprived of his army and shorn of his glory, he went to his estate at Manga de Clavo, near Vera Cruz, and, humbled and mortified and in bad repute with his countrymen, he continued to live in complete retirement—one of the severest trials to his ever-restless spirit. But when, in 1839, the French Squadron, under Prince de Joinville, had taken the Castle of San Juan, and had landed to take possession of Vera Cruz, Santa Anna at the head of a detachment made a gallant attack upon them and drove them back to their shipping. In this action, as

has been intimated, he lost his left leg below the knee. But the common remark, that there is no loss without some gain, proved particularly true in his case. The departed limb was afterwards brought to the capital and buried with all the honors of war, a funeral oration appropriate to the occasion being pronounced over it by a distinguished member of the Mexican Congress. The defeat and disgrace of San Jacinto were forgotten, and the memory of former services and of the recent achievement alone possessed the minds of the public. The Hero's wooden substitute became the constant badge of his bravery and devotion, and by its aid he advanced in favor with his countrymen, and to supreme power in the government.

Santa Anna must have possessed a remarkable degree of diplomatic tact, and energy of character to have made him so uniformly successful in his country's revolutions. He has now, for the fourth time been at the head of the government. Indeed, his history is interwoven with that of his country for the past twenty-five years. He was principal in forming the federal republican constitution of 1824; he put the finishing stroke to the war of independence, by defeating the last invading army of Spain, in 1829; he favored the change from the federal to the consolidated form of government in 1836, because he thought his countrymen were not yet qualified to sustain a strictly republican government; he assumed the dictatorship in 1841, on the strength of that clause in the constitution which delegated to the chief magistrate 'all necessary powers' to preserve the public tranquility. Another revolution broke out and sent him into banishment.

Such is the man on whom the Mexicans have rested their hopes and expectations in their hour of trial. And considering the distracted state of the country, the emptiness of the public treasury, and the badness of the materials for his armies, Santa Anna, during the present contest with this country, has cer-

tainly done what few other men could do.— On his return from exile in Cuba, in October last, he gathered an army of 20,000 men, and, poorly supplied, pushed his march through tracts of burning sands, seven hundred miles; gave General Taylor a hard fight; hastened back and quelled an insurrection and restored tranquility in the capital; collected another force of 12,000 men, marched to meet the invading army, and made warm work for General Scott in the mountain pass of Cerro Gordo. He has been accused of

cowardice for flying from the field in season to effect a safe retreat; but so long as he was the head and soul of the nation, surely patriotism would not dictate that he should throw away his life in battle, or permit himself to fall into the hands of the enemy.

Though a *fallen* hero, we should not be unwilling to render him whatever may be his due; nor is it the part of candor to overlook the meliorating circumstances or the brighter passages that relieve the gloomy annals of his unfortunate country.

CHAPTER V.

GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF MEXICO.

Its Extent and Area. Remarkably varied surface—Mountains and Volcanoes. Wonderful formation of a new Volcano. Earthquakes. Rivers. Lakes. Climate. Soil. Agricultural Productions. The Maguey. Pulque or Mexican Whisky. Manufactures.—Commerce. Seaports. Mines of Gold and Silver. Difficulties in the way of working them. Battle between the Miners and Banditti. Mint in the City of Mexico. The number of States. Towns and Cities; Acapulco, Puebla, Cholula, Vera Cruz, Alvarado. Queretaro, Valladolid, Guanajuato, Guadalajara, San Blas, Zacatecas, Aguas Calientes, Oaxaca, Peninsula of Yucatan, Campeachy, Chiapa, Palanque, Tampico, Matamoros, Monterey, Saltillo, Buenavista, San Louis Potosi, Chihuahua, Territories of New Mexico and Upper and Lower California.

MEXICO is an extensive territory, situated in the southern part of North America. Its length is about 2500 miles; its breadth varies from 120 to 1200 miles; and its whole surface contains an area of about 1,500,000 square miles.

The surface of the country is extremely varied; and to this circumstance nearly as much as to the difference of latitude, in so extensive a country, may be attributed that singular variety of climate by which it is distinguished from most other regions. The Cordilleras, or mountain chain which extends into Mexico from the south, and seems to be a continuation of the Andes, diverges as it proceeds north into two great arms like the upper part of the letter Y, following the line of the coast on each side. The most westerly of these chains or that parallel to the shores of the Pacific, has some very high summits, and continues northward till it extends into the United States, where it is called the Rocky Mountains. The eastern

branch, from fifty to a hundred miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico, continues northwardly till it subsides into the broad plains of Texas. The tract included between these ranges, comprising about three fifths of the surface of the republic, is a vast table land elevated from 6900 to 8000 feet above the sea. On account of this elevation this region has a temperate climate, though much of the plateau is within the torrid zone. This table land is not intersected by any deep transverse valleys, and Humboldt remarks that carriages proceed from the capital to Santa Fe in New Mexico, a distance of 1500 miles, without any important deviation from an apparent level.

The most important mountains are the following: Popocatepetl or the smoking mountain, 17,716 feet high, and the highest in Mexico. It is constantly throwing out its clouds of smoke, and sometimes ashes, but has not for several centuries ejected lava. This mountain is covered with eternal snow;

it is in full view from the city of Mexico, in a south-easterly direction, and its glittering summit and clouds of smoke present a magnificent appearance. It is said that Cortez, being out of powder, at a time during the conquest, undertook to manufacture some. He obtained saltpetre from a mine, and a half dozen of his men with incredible toil climbed up the snows and ice of Popocatepetl, and one of the number was let down by a rope and basket, four hundred feet among the blue vapors, to obtain sulphur. Another snow-capt mountain southwest from Popocatepetl, and also in view from the city, is Iztaccihuatl, or the 'white woman.' It is a volcanic mountain but has not been active apparently for ages, and hardly any signs of a crater are to be seen. The most eastern volcano is Tuxtla, a few miles west of Vera Cruz. It had an eruption in 1793, the ashes of which were carried to Perote, a distance of 150 miles. The first object the voyager sees as his vessel approaches Vera Cruz is the white peak of Orizava. It is about fifty miles from the coast and may be seen one hundred miles at sea. It is 17,400 feet high, and all above 15,092 feet is covered with snow, that being the point in that latitude at which the limit of perpetual snow commences. This is also a volcano. In the year 1545, it emitted smoke and ashes; but since that time there has been no eruption of any sort.

Towards the Pacific, and nearly west of the capital, is the volcano of Colima, from which smoke and ashes are sometimes emitted but not lava. Between Colima and Mexico is the Volcano of Jorullo. The formation of this volcano is quite recent, and is one of the most extraordinary phenomena which have been observed on our globe. The plain of Malpais, covered with small cones from six to ten feet in height, is part of an elevated table-land bounded by hills of basaltic rocks and the remains of ancient volcanic eruptions. From the period of the

discovery of America to the middle of the last century, this district has undergone no change of surface, and the seat of the crater was then covered with a plantation of indigo and sugar cane; when, in June 1759, hollow sounds were heard, and a succession of earthquakes continued for two months, to the great consternation of the inhabitants. From the beginning of September everything seemed to announce the establishment of tranquility, but in the night of the 28th the frightful subterranean noises again commenced. The Indians fled to the neighboring mountains. A tract not less than from three to four square miles in extent rose up in the shape of a dome; and those who witnessed the phenomenon asserted that the flames were seen issuing from a space of more than six square miles, while the fragments of burning rocks were projected to an immense height, and the surface of the ground undulated like an agitated sea.

Two brooks which watered the plantations precipitated themselves into the burning chasm. Thousands of the small cones, described above, suddenly appeared, and in the midst of these eminences, called 'hornitos' or ovens, six great masses, having an elevation of from 1312 to 1640 feet above the original level of the plain, sprang up from a gulf running from the northeast to the southwest. The most elevated of these mounds is the great volcano of Jorullo which is constantly burning.

The eruptions of this central volcano continued till February 1760, when they became less frequent. The Indians, who had abandoned all the villages within thirty miles of it, returned once more to their cottages, and advanced towards the mountains of Aguasarco and Santa Ines, to contemplate the streams of fire that issued from the numberless apertures. The roofs of the houses of Queretaro, 166 miles distant, were covered with volcanic dust. Another eruption happened in 1819, accompanied by an earthquake, during which ashes fell at the city of

Guanaxauto, 140 miles distant from Jorullo, in such quantities as to lie six inches deep in the streets.

It is a singular fact that there are five volcanoes nearly in a line from east to west on the nineteenth parallel of latitude; which induces Humboldt to think that there is a seam or fissure in the rocky structure of the earth's crust, extending across Mexico, nearly at right angles to the mountain ranges, and that these volcanoes are merely outlets above this seam through which escape the internal fires and vapors. These five volcanoes, beginning at the east, are Tuxtla, Orizava, Popocatepetl, Jorullo, and Colima. Perote is a mountain of considerable elevation, though not rising to the limit of perpetual snow. It is one of the points in the eastern range of the Cordilleras and is near the road from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico. From the circumstance of its having an immense square rock on its summit, looking like a huge coffer or chest, it is called the Coffer of Perote. Another elevation is the peak of Toluca.

Mexico is subject to earthquakes, but not very severe shocks. Countries that are well supplied with active volcanoes, which serve as vents for the steam and gasses within, are not often visited by destructive earthquakes.

The rivers of Mexico are not very numerous nor, in general, of considerable magnitude, and are poorly adapted to inland navigation. The principal is the Rio Grande, which, rising in the northern part of the country, flows, by a south-easterly course about 1800 miles, into the gulf of Mexico. The Sacramento and Buenaventura are rivers of Upper California, of which, however, our knowledge is extremely slight. The Colorado of the West is a large river, 900 miles in length, but its course is through countries thinly peopled and little known. It falls into the Gulf of California, after receiving the Gila, a considerable stream.

The lakes of this country are numerous, but none of them appear to be of great ex-

tent. The valley of Mexico contains five small lakes, on which, floating gardens, made by a sort of raft covered with a layer of rich earth, were once numerous; but they are now mostly fixed, though some are still moveable. The only well-known lake, on a considerable scale, is that of Chapala, which is estimated to contain an area of about 1300 square miles. The Tule lakes in Upper California, and some others, near the northern boundary of Mexico, and are said to be considerable bodies of water, as yet they are but little known.

In regard to climate, soil and the varied productions of nature, Mexico is one of the most favored lands in the world; and there is no country that would experience so little inconvenience from having its ports blockaded; for, as Humboldt remarks, under careful cultivation it is capable of producing all that commerce brings together from every part of the globe; sugar, cochineal, cocoa, cotton, coffee, wheat, hemp, flax, silk, oil, wine, oranges, lemons, and the unnumbered fruits and flowers of tropical and temperate regions.

Difference of elevation has the same effect as difference of latitude. The tracts of low land on the eastern and western coasts, have the temperature and vegetable productions of the West Indies, and in ascending the sides of the Cordilleras there is a gradual diminution of temperature and change of vegetation; upon the vast table land are the climate, grains, and plants of the temperate regions, and higher up the mountain sides are the dark belts of pine and fir of the frozen zones. So that in passing from Vera Cruz to the central regions the traveller, in two days' time, observes all the gradations of climate and vegetable productions that he would in going from the equator to the arctic regions.

Besides the potatoe and other nutritive roots, corn and the various other grains, a very important article of sustenance is the Banana, or bread-plant as it is sometimes

called; a gigantic production, the fruit of which is often three or four inches in diameter and seven or eight inches in length. It is said that there is no plant that produces on the same extent of land and with so little labor, the same quantity of food. Humboldt asserts that an acre planted with bananas will furnish food for more than fifty individuals, whereas the same extent of land if sown with wheat in Europe, would not support more than two individuals. And all the labor required to raise this enormous product is to cut off the stems when the fruit is ripe, and to give the earth a slight digging about the roots of the plant once or twice a year.—‘Hence,’ says he, ‘nothing strikes a European recently arrived in Mexico with more astonishment than the smallness of the patches of cultivated grounds round cabins that swarm with children.’

But the most remarkable and apparently the most essential plant is the *Maguey* or American Agave, inasmuch as a stimulating beverage is obtained from it. It has been called the vine of Mexico. In good soil it grows to an enormous size, being a foot through at the butt, and the central stem twenty-five or thirty feet high. When the plant is in its efflorescent state which occurs in from seven to fifteen years after the planting, the centre stock is cut off above the joint of the branches, forming a bowl in which the sap collects. The juice obtained from a vigorous plant amount to a gallon or more a day, for four or five months in succession. The juice is slightly acid and after fermentation it becomes *pulque*, as they call it, and possesses somewhat of the virtues and excellent qualities of cider! from this, by distillation, they obtain a sort of whisky or brandy. They also obtain ardent spirits from sugar-cane, corn and other grains. So it appears that among the comforts of life the Mexicans are not destitute of the intoxicating beverages.

It is said that the pulque has a disagreeable and disgusting smell and taste till one

becomes accustomed to it. Whether our soldiers have overcome this difficulty I am not aware; should judge so, however, from the fact that the anti-license Generals Cushing and Worth abolished the pulque shops in Matamoras and Vera Cruz.

It appears the Mexicans are not very much given to changes except those of government, for they still retain the old and new bottles of scripture times. Mr. Thompson says, ‘the juice of the maguey is first put into an ox-hide, dressed and made perfectly tight.—There the liquor ferments, when it is drawn off into smaller vessels, made of the skin of a hog, and in these it is carried to market. The *modern* inventions of hogsheads and barrels have by no means come into common use in Mexico. These skins look for all the world like a hog cleaned and dressed. I saw them every day, hanging in front of the pulque shops as a sign, and I had been some time in Mexico before I discovered that they were not really porkers.’

As an agricultural country, Mexico has been celebrated for the vast variety of productions which can be raised in its soil, according to the different degrees of elevation at which cultivation is carried on. It is divided into warm lands, temperate lands, and cold lands. The warm or low lands of the coast, though capable of yielding in profusion all the productions of the torrid zone, are subject to so deadly a pestilence, that even the natives prefer to inhabit a poorer soil on the higher grounds; and Europeans, except the few fixed by commercial pursuits, pass through it in trembling haste, as if death pursued them. The cold or high lands, again, are nearly devoid of vegetation, exhibiting on a few scattered spots the plants of the north. It is only on the ‘temperate lands’ that the real and effective vegetation exists; and there the finest plants of the most genial temperate climates are produced in higher perfection than in most other parts of the known world.

The wheat of Mexico excels that of most

other countries, both in quality and abundance, provided that by nature or art it has been supplied during growth with sufficient moisture. Indian corn, the proper grain of America, is still more generally cultivated, and forms the standing food of the people. Its harvests are equally profuse. Barley and rye grow on the colder grounds; the first forming the chief food of horses. Farther down grows the banana, which, though the proper food of the torrid zone, grows so high, that Humboldt calculates 50,000 square miles may be fit for it. Of all vegetables it yields the greatest proportion of aliment with the least culture. The manioc root, under the same climate, can be made to produce abundance of palatable and wholesome food.

Sugar, coffee, and cotton, are all produced of excellent quality, but only for internal use; and cocoa, though an universal beverage, is procured by importation. Cochineal is almost the only article collected extensively for export. This is a small insect, used for dyeing a bright scarlet. It grows in myriads on the cactus or prickly pear, which is raised in plantations for this purpose. The culture is laborious, and has diminished of late, but the price has not increased, substitutes being employed. There is also indigo, but it is inferior to that of Guatemala. Vanilla, the flavoring material of the chocolate, is obtained in the forests of Oaxaca and Vera Cruz; and exported to the amount of 40,000 or 50,000 dollars annually.

Manufactures in Mexico are in a very rude state. There are, however, considerable fabrics of coarse red earthenware and glass; also, manufactures of coarse woollens and cottons. Working in gold and silver has been a favorite occupation. Services of plate, worth 30,000 or 40,000 dollars, have been manufactured at Mexico, which, for elegance and fine workmanship, may rival the best of the kind in Europe. The coaches of Mexico have long been celebrated both for good construction and beauty, it being the particular ambition of all, who possibly can, to have their coach.

The commerce of Mexico does not correspond with its great fame for wealth. The exports of the precious metals form the principal article; next to this is cochineal, to which may be added sugar, indigo, vanilla, sarsaparilla, jalap, logwood, and pimento. The annual exports, including the precious metals, amount to about 20,000,000 dollars; the imports are considerably less. Under the Spanish government, Vera Cruz and Acapulco had a monopoly of the trade of Mexico; but since the revolution a considerable amount has centred in other ports, of which the chief are, in the northern part of the gulf, Tampico and Matamoras; Campeachy and Tabasco in the south; San Blas and Mazatlan, on the western coast, and Guayamas in the Gulf of California.

The mines of gold and silver, however, are the grand objects which have connected the idea of unbounded wealth and romantic splendor with the name of Mexico.

In point of mineral treasures, Mexico excels every other part of America except, perhaps, Peru. The quantity of silver annually obtained from its mines, very much exceeds that furnished by all the mines of Europe; but on the other hand, the gold is not much more abundant than in Hungary and Transylvania; the proportion which the gold of Mexico bears to the silver, being as 1 to 26 nearly. Before the war of independence, which commenced in 1810. There were 37 mining districts in Mexico, and somewhat more than 3000 mines, producing annually about 21 million dollars in silver and about 2 millions in gold. Towards the close of the struggle many of the mines had been deserted and the produce diminished one half.

Many companies have been formed, several English, and one or two under the direction of Americans, and vast sums have been expended in machinery and mining operations, which, though the mines have been productive, have not been very profitable to the proprietors. There are many obstacles in the way of the mining interests. The dis-

tracted state of the country since the revolution, the conflicting claims and titles to the mineral lands, the imperfect mining processes, the badness of the roads, and the general insecurity of property, all tend to discourage these enterprises. M. Chevailier, thus speaks of the state of things in 1835, 'How,' asks he, 'can the mines be worked with any feeling of security, when it requires a little army to escort the smallest portion of the precious metal to its place of destination? Between the mine of Real del Monte and the village of Tezeyuco is a mountain pass where a grand battle was fought between the miners and the banditti of the country. The miners were defeated, overpowered by numbers, but not without having sold their lives as dearly as possible. The mine is now guarded by artillery and grape shot, and the Englishmen employed there are regularly drilled in the use of the musket.'

'The mineral riches of the country,' says McCulloch, 'are inexhaustible, and there only wants a government able and willing to afford security to make the produce of the mines greater than ever. Many of the mines have been very imperfectly wrought, and by far the larger part of the richest veins is yet unexplored.'

In the departments of Mexico, Guanaxato, Zacatecas, Jalisco, Durango, San Louis Potosi, and Chihuahua, the total product of the mines annually, for the years 1834-5-6-7, was about twelve millions dollars.

The official returns for the year, 1842 exhibit an exportation of gold and silver, as registered at the custom-houses, amounting to 18,500,000 dollars.

The country also produces quicksilver, tin, zinc, copper and iron. But people are not apt to dig for iron while they can find gold.—Hence no iron mine was worked in Mexico till 1825. Previous to which, and even now, their iron is chiefly imported. Cortez, in one of his despatches to King Charles V., speaks of the great expense of keeping the horses of his cavalry shod; for, says he, a horse shoe

is worth its weight in gold and twice its weight in silver. But his illustrious descendants obviate the difficulty, as we are told, by letting their war-ponies go barefoot.

The mint in the city of Mexico is a prodigious establishment, in which all the processes are carried on with the greatest activity. It is capable of stamping 100,000 dollars within the hour. So rapid an operation is seldom required; yet there have passed through it probably upwards of three thousand million dollars.

The want of harbors must ever prevent Mexico from being a great maritime power. There are a few excellent harbors on the Pacific, but nearly the whole of the Gulf coast is sloping and sandy. Even the harbor of Vera Cruz is hardly worthy of the name, it being an open roadstead, with a poor anchorage, and exposed to the furious north winds.

The territory of the republic was divided by the constitution of 1824 into nineteen states, four territories and the Federal Districts.

Though the sciences of mining, geometry, architecture, and astronomy, have received some attention in Mexico, yet the great body of the people are deplorably ignorant. This is owing to the illiberal policy of the Spanish government, which confided all civil, military, and ecclesiastical dignities only to Europeans, and discouraged the education of those classes which now compose the population of the republic. Since the revolution, the country has been too much disturbed to allow the cure of this disorder, yet steps have already been taken in the different States towards providing means for general education.

Acapulco, on the west coast, 200 miles from Mexico, is one of the most magnificent harbors in the world, seeming as if it were excavated by art out of a vast circuit of granite rocks, which shut out all view of the sea. Yet while Vera Cruz, with its wretched anchorage amid sand-banks, annually received

from 400 to 500 vessels, that of Acapulco scarcely received 10, even in the time of the Manila galleon, the discontinuance of which reduced it to a state of insignificance. It has, however, of late, considerably revived; and its customs, after falling so low as 10,000 had risen in 1841 to \$400,000.

Puebla, the capital of the State of Puebla, is a handsome and large city. It is now occupied by the American army under General Scott, and is about eighty miles from the city of Mexico. It is entirely Spanish, having been founded since the conquest. The houses are large and lofty, the walls often covered with paintings, while the roof is ornamented with glazed tiles. The cathedral is a vast pile, with little external ornament: but the interior is rich beyond description. The high altar is composed of the most beautiful marble and precious stones; its numerous and lofty columns, with plinths and capitals of burnished gold, its statues and other ornaments, have an unequalled effect. In manufactures it takes the lead of other Mexican cities: those of woollen have declined; but those of earthenware and glass are still flourishing. It is somewhat extensively engaged in cotton manufactures, and has been called the Lowell of Mexico. The population is estimated at about 80,000.

Cholula, the ancient capital of a great independent republic, has declined into a town containing 6000 souls. The pyramid of Cholula is the work of art which, next to the pyramids of Egypt, approaches nearest in magnitude and vastness to those of nature. It is not nearly so high as the greatest Egyptian pyramid, being only 172 feet; but the length is nearly double; 1355 feet, instead of 728.

Vera Cruz, in which centres almost all the trade of Mexico, is well and handsomely built, and its red and white cupolas, towers, and battlements, have a splendid effect when seen from the water. The streets also are kept extremely neat and clean; yet it is considered the most disagreeable of all places of

residence. This arises not merely from the pestilence which taints the air; the surrounding country is covered with sand blown into hillocks, which, reflecting the rays of the sun, render the heat more oppressive. Vera Cruz is about two hundred miles from Tampico, and two hundred and fifty from the city of Mexico by the usual route.

This place appears to have sensibly declined since the dissolution of the ties which connected Mexico with the mother country. The population is about 7000. The castle of San Juan de Ulua, the last hold of Spain in the New World, and which commands the entrance of the port, has been long thought to be of immense strength, but was, notwithstanding, captured with comparative ease by a small French squadron.

The fine calzada, or paved road, from Vera Cruz into the interior, runs up to the handsome town of Jalapa. The Puente Nacional, or National Bridge, between the two cities, is a stupendous work of solid masonry, thrown over a wild and steep ravine, through which runs the rapid river Antigua. Jalapa is commodiously situated in a delightful district, about 4000 feet above the sea. It has 12,000 inhabitants, and was formerly the residence of the rich Spanish merchants of Vera Cruz during the sickly season. The neighborhood is finely wooded, and is particularly remarkable for the medical article jalap, which takes its name from the city.

On the coast, to the southward, are the ports of Alvarado and Huasacualco, the former of which became the principal entrepot on the gulf, during the occupation of San Juan de Ulua by the Spanish forces; and the latter derives some interest from its situation at the termination of the proposed canal from the Gulf of Mexico to that of Tehuantepec, about 120 miles.

Queretaro, the capital of a State of the same name, is one of the most beautiful and delightfully situated, as well as one of the most industrious and wealthy cities of Mexico. The streets all cross each other at right

angles, and terminate in its three principal squares. Its aqueduct, about ten miles in length, with its bold and lofty arches, and its splendid churches and convents, give the city an air of magnificence. The convent of Santa Clara is more than two miles in circuit. Population, 40,000.

Valladolid, the capital of the state of Michoacan, contains 25,000 inhabitants; it is delightfully situated, 6300 feet above the sea, where snow sometimes falls. There are several mines in the vicinity, but none of first rate magnitude. It has wide, clean streets, a magnificent cathedral, and a handsome plaza or public square.

Guauaxuto, the capital of the state of the same name, is situated in the midst of a rich mining district, is built on very uneven ground, and the streets are often very steep; but the buildings are in general handsome, and some of the churches are very fine; the alhondiga, or public granary, an immense quadrangular edifice, is a remarkable object. The population of the city and neighborhood has been reduced from 90,000 to about two-thirds of that number.

Guadalajara, the capital of Jalisco, which in 1798 was estimated to contain 19,500 inhabitants, has at present 60,000. It is regularly laid out with wide, straight streets, and contains many handsome churches and convents. The mountain of Colima in this state, 9000 feet high, throws out smoke and ashes, and forms the western extremity of the volcanic chain which traverses Mexico from east to west.

San Blas is situated near the mouth of the Rio Grande, and during a certain season of the year, it is extremely unhealthy, and at that time the rain falls in such torrents that no roof can exclude it, and it is impossible without danger to go out into the streets.—At the commencement of this season, therefore, a general migration takes place; and the population is reduced in a few days from 3000 to 150, at which it remains stationary until the return of the dry season. Tepic,

eighteen leagues from San Blas, is a beautiful town, in the midst of a cultivated plain, and its streets regularly laid out, are enlivened by rows of trees, gardens and terraces.—Thither the people of San Blas remove during the sickly season, at which time the population of Tepic amounts to 8000 or 10,000.

Zacatecas, the capital of the state of Zacatecas, contains 38,000 inhabitants. The mint, which is the second in point of importance in Mexico, employs 3000 persons and 60,000 dollars have been coined here in twenty-four hours. The total coinage in five years, from 1821 to 1826, was upwards of 17,500,000 dollars. Aguas Calientes, in the vicinity of Zacatecas, derives its name from its warm springs, is a pretty town, in a fertile district, and with a delightful climate.—The inhabitants about 20,000 in number, carry on some manufactures. Fresnillo, Sombrerete, and Pinos, are mining towns with from 12,000 to 16,000 inhabitants.

Oaxaca, the capital of the state of the same name, called Antequera at the time of the conquest, is a flourishing place; in 1792, it had 24,000 inhabitants, and although it suffered severely during the revolution, its present population is about 40,000. Tehuantepec, its only port, is not a good one; but is of considerable value as a channel, by which the indigo of Guatemala is conveyed to Europe.

The peninsula of Yucatan, forms the eastern extremity of Mexico. It is a vast plain, only intersected by a chain of mountains, which do not rise above 4000 feet. This was the first part of Mexico in which the Spaniards landed, and, though it is less improved than the interior, they found, to their surprise, indications that civilization was in a more advanced state here than in the islands; stone houses, pyramidal temples, enclosed fields, and a clothed and civilized people.—Merida, the capital, is a small town. Campeachy, also a small town, is, however, a fortified place, and is important on account of its harbor, from which is shipped the logwood.

cut in the vicinity. Population, about 6000.

Chiapa formed the most northerly district of Guatimala; but the greater part of it, on a late occasion, separated itself from Guatimala, and united with Mexico. The soil is fertile, and capable of yielding, in profusion, tropical fruits and grain. Though low, yet it is free from damp, and not unhealthful.

Chiapa of the Spaniards, called also Ciudad Real, though ranking as the capital, is now only a small place of 4000 inhabitants. Chiapa of the Indians is larger, and carries on a considerable trade.

Near Palenque are seen the remains of the great ancient city of Calhuacan. Fourteen large buildings, called by the natives the Stone Houses, remain nearly entire; and for three or four leagues either way, the fragments of the other fallen buildings are seen extending along the mountain. They are of a rude and massive construction, well calculated for durability; and the principal apartments are adorned with numerous figures in relief, representing human beings of strange form, and variously habited and adorned.

Tuspan is a small port 75 miles south of Tampico. It was taken by the American squadron under Commodore Perry last spring.

Tampico, near the mouth of the river of the same name, was founded in 1824, and has rapidly increased on account of its commercial advantages, which have drawn thither the inhabitants of Altamira, once a place of some importance. Tampico is one of the towns now in possession of the American troops; it is 300 miles from Mexico. It is a sickly place, and has a poor harbor, the mouth of the river having a sand bar across it, which can be passed only by boats. It has about 5000 inhabitants, but it suffers under a want of good water. Further north, on the Santander, is the port of Soto la Marina, with some trade; and on the south bank of the Rio Grande at no great distance from its mouth is Matamoras, the first Mexican town taken by the Mexican army in the present

war, it being the prize of victory, May, 1846.

Above two hundred miles west of Matamoras is Monterey, the chief town of the State of New Leone, which will hereafter be noted in history for the hard fought battles around it, and its surrender to Gen. Taylor and his brave troops. Population about 12,000.

Some sixty miles south west of Monterey is Saltillo, for some time the head-quarters of the American army; and ten or twelve miles south of this is Buenavista, the scene of the hardest fought battle that has taken place, or perhaps will take place, between the American and Mexican armies. Buenavista, (*the beautiful view,*) has added another to the bloody fields which are sprinkled all over the surface of the Mexican republic.

San Luis Potosi, the capital of the state of the same name, is one of the most important inland towns in Mexico, being the depot of the trade of Tampico with the northern and western parts of the republic. It is well built, and contains several convents remarkable for their extent, a mint, a college, and numerous churches. Population, 50,000.—It is about midway between Monterey and Mexico, and some 350 miles from each.

Durango, the capital of the state of Durango, is a well-built town, with a mint, in which the silver of the vicinity is coined. It contains 25,000 inhabitants.

Chihuahua, the capital of Chihuahua, is well-built, and contains some costly churches, monasteries, and other public edifices; but the population has been reduced from 50,000 to one-third of that number. The rich mines of Santa Julalia, in its vicinity, once yielded 5,000,000 dollars a year. In the western part of the State are the Casas Grandes, or ruins of large square buildings, whose sides are accurately ranged north and south; a space of several leagues is covered with these remains, consisting of aqueducts, and various other structures.

Sonora and Sinaloa embrace a vast tract lying along the Gulf of California. The southern part only contains some white in-

habitants, the centre and north being occupied by various Indian tribes; many of whom are civilized and industrious. This region contains rich silver mines; gold is obtained from washings, and auriferous copper ore abounds. There are also valuable pearl fisheries. Wheat, hides, furs, gold, silver, and copper, are exported. Guaymas, on the Gulf of California, is said to be the best harbor of Mexico, but the town is unhealthful, and the water brackish. Population, 8000. Petic, in the interior, is the residence of the wealthy merchants, and a place of considerable trade, being the depot of articles imported into Guaymas for Upper Sonora and New Mexico. It contains about 5,000 inhabitants.

Alamos is a place of about 6000 inhabitants, having in its vicinity some of the richest silver-mines in Mexico. Mazatlan has a good harbor, though exposed to the southwest winds.

The territory of New Mexico is only an infant settlement, formed on the upper part of the Rio Grande, in a fertile tract of land, but having a climate remarkably cold, considering the latitude. A great number of sheep are reared, of which about 30,000 are sent every year to the southward; and there are some mines of valuable copper. Santa Fe, the capital, contains about 5000 inhabitants. The caravan route from the state of Missouri terminates here.

Lower California is a long peninsula in the Pacific, parallel to the continent, from which it is separated by its deep gulf 800 miles long and from 50 to 100 wide. The soil is sandy and arid, and only a few favored spots present a trace of vegetation. There are about 7000 or 8000 white inhabitants and converted Indians, and 4000 savages. The missions have been pretty much broken up since the revolution. Loretto, once a place of some note, now contains about 250 inhabitants.

New or Upper California is a vast tract extending north from Lower California to the latitude of 42°. A lofty ridge of mountains

runs along its western side, not far from the sea, forming the prolongation of the mountains of the peninsula, and extending north beyond the Columbia river. Along the coast some missions have been founded, and some settlements of whites effected. The former are now rapidly declining. There are 21 establishments, containing about 7000 converts. These are Indians, who have from time to time, been forced to join the missions. They are kindly treated, but are not allowed to leave the settlements; and the surplus of their labor belongs to the missionaries; the missions have about 300,000 head of cattle.

The coast has some excellent harbors, among which is that of St. Francisco, which affords perfect security to ships of any burthen, with plentiful supplies of fresh beef, vegetables, wood, and fresh water. Monterey, the principal town of Upper California, has 3000 inhabitants.

On the eastward of the coast above mentioned, and extending to the Colorado and the rocky mountains, is a vast sandy plain, about 200 miles in width by 500 in length, consisting of a bare, arid surface, with some isolated mountains interspersed here and there over its dreary bosom.

'Agriculture,' says M. Chevalier, 'is neglected. No law now prevents the planting of the vine and the olive tree; not only, however, has no advantage been taken of this change, but the very lands which were cultivated in the time of the Spaniards are now lying fallow. In a circle of a few leagues round Mexico, I have seen large villages almost abandoned. In this delightful climate, the only manure which the land requires is water; this is rather scarce, yet many of the hydraulic constructions, raised by the Spaniards at a great cost, are in ruins and seem likely to remain so. The lands, which by means of artificial irrigation were the most fertile in the world, are gradually becoming completely sterile. Their ploughs and other agricultural instruments are of the rudest description. No one troubles himself to in-

introduce European improvements, or even to import better tools from the United States.— I made the passage from New Orleans to Vera Cruz with General Arista, who had been exiled in consequence of some insurrection or other in which he had been concerned. Wearied with the changes of revolutions, he had determined to devote himself to agriculture. He had scarcely, however, landed at Vera Cruz, when he was thrown into prison, upon some vague pretext; and continued for a long time under arrest, and his ploughs, harrows, and winnowing machines, remained under sequestration, suspected, probably, of abetting the General in some subversive design.'

The *Maguey* has been spoken of in a former part of the chapter, but to show what uses the ancient Mexicans made of it, the following paragraph is inserted from Prescott's History of the Conquest :

'But the miracle of nature was the great Mexican aloe, or maguey, whose clustering pyramids of flowers, towering above their

dark coronals of leaves were seen sprinkled over many a broad acre of tableland. As we have already noticed, its bruised leaves afforded a paste from which paper was manufactured; its juice was fermented into an intoxicating beverage, *pulque*, of which the natives, to this day, are excessively fond; its leaves further supplied an impenetrable thatch for the more humble dwellings; thread, of which coarse stuffs were made, and strong cords, were drawn from its tough and twisted fibres; pins and needles were made of the thorns at the extremity of its leaves; and the root, when properly cooked, was converted into a palatable and nutritious food. The *agave*, in short, was meat, drink, clothing, and writing materials for the Aztec. Surely, never did nature enclose in so compact a form so many of the elements of human comfort and civilization !'

NOTE.—In addition to the authorities named, a portion of this chapter has been derived from Murray's 'Encyclopedia of Geography,' and Mitchell's 'Geographical Reader.'

CHAPTER VI.

CITY OF MEXICO. THE CHURCH, ITS WEALTH. POPULATION. THE ARMY.

The Mexican Valley and Lakes. Chinampas or Floating Gardens. Diminution of the Waters of the Lakes. The present City of Mexico, founded by Cortez. Plaza Mayor or Great Square. Churches. Palace of the President. College. Public Prison. Amphitheatre. Cigar Manufactory. Museum. The Streets. Paseo or Public Carriage Way. Vehicles, Ladies, Cavaliers. The Alameda or Public Promenade. Colonades. Environs. The Weather. Population of the City. Wealth of the Churches. The Great Cathedral—Its Interior—Enormous Treasures—Huge Chandelier—Image of the Virgin loaded with Pearls and Diamonds. The Catholic Religion in Mexico. Influence of the Clergy. Attempts to Confiscate the Church Property. Intolerance, Burial Refused to Protestants. Egotism of the Mexicans. A Scene of Penance. The Present War and the Church. Population of the Republic. Various Races. Political Rights. Character and Condition of the present Indian Race. Causes of Anarchy.—A Colonel turned Robber. Banditti. Robbery of Mr. Cushing. The Army. Mode of Recruiting. Inferiority of Mexican to American Soldiers. Patriotism of the Mexicans. Siege of Vera Cruz. Description of the Castle of St. Juan de Ulua. Landing of General Scott's Army. A Mexican Hero.

THE valley of Mexico, in which the city is situated, occupies the tableland from six to eight thousand feet high, about midway between the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean. It is an oval basin 63 miles in length by 43 in breadth, and is surrounded by a battlement of porphyritic and basaltic rocks and mountains varying from two thousand to ten thousand feet in height. On the south are the two colossal summits of Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl. The former more than two thousand feet higher than the monarch of Europe, Mont Blanc. There they stand, like faithful sentinels of the enchanted valley. The flashing of their silver sheens of eternal snow proclaims the rising sun long before his level beams salute the eyes of mortals; and while the gray twilight begins to settle over the plains, the clouds of smoke from the hoary summit of Popocatepetl are illuminated by the rays of the day god from far below the western horizon.

The valley of Mexico inclosed within this rampart of hills and mountains contains 1700 square miles. In the lowest portions of this basin are several lakes, the waters of which cover a surface of 170 square miles, or about one tenth of the valley. In the north-western part of this valley on the borders of Tezcuco, the largest of the lakes, stands the city of Mexico, occupying precisely the same spot as at the time of the conquest; although at that time it was surrounded by water and approached by three dykes or causeways.

These lakes were once sprinkled over with *chinampas* or floating gardens. From the marshy borders, in times of flood, portions of land were separated, and, covered with herbs and bound together by roots, they floated on the water. Sometimes several of

these were driven together by the wind and formed a little island. These were taken possession of and cultivated, and were moved from place to place, sometimes having small trees upon them and the huts of the Indians who tended them. *Artificial* chinampas were made of reeds, roots and brushwood compacted together and covered with rich earth. Thus with a fertile soil and supplied with moisture from the water beneath, they afforded a luxuriant growth of vegetable productions, and the richest variety of flowers, the last of which were cultivated with great care by the native Mexicans, who are excessively fond of these sweet decorations of Nature.

This delightful valley, encircled by its magnificent panorama of mountains; the lovely shores, dotted with groves and villages which seemed to rise out of the water; these aquatic domains floating on the ample bosom of the lake cultivated and adorned by Nature's own children; the Indian maidens (fit successors to the Nymphs and Naiads) with their sparkling eyes and long black hair, passing to and fro in their light canoes decked out with fruits and flowers, what more fairy-like and enchanting! No wonder that to many of the Spaniards 'it appeared doubtful whether they were asleep or awake,' when they first looked upon this Eden of the western world. But alas! the spell is broken, the flowery islands no longer float on the silvery lake, but are fixed to the dull shores; the ancient possessor no longer treads them with the firm step and noble bearing of freedom, nor does the maid of the ebon hair lash the sparkling waters with the same elastic stroke as when she called her lord, the lord of the soil. Their office now is, to cultivate lands that are not their own, and administer to the wants of those who have despoiled them of their ancient inheritance.

But to return from the chinampas. Owing to the increased evaporation caused by cutting down the ancient forests, and to the drainage of the higher lakes to prevent the

inundation of the city, to which it was formerly subject, the waters of lake Tezcuco are somewhat diminished, and the city instead of being on an island is a mile and a half from the western shore of the lake; though the great square is only four feet above the level of the water. The road in the direction of Vera Cruz for sixteen or eighteen miles passes over a raised causeway through the lakes. The ancient dykes on the north, west and south still remain, though they are now merely high paved roads leading through the marshy land instead of the water as formerly.

The present city of Mexico is said to be one of the most beautiful and splendid on the western continent; not excepting Philadelphia for regularity and beauty of arrangement. Its situation, with its landscape of hills valley and lakes, is the most picturesque imaginable. The ground it occupies is almost a perfect level, the buildings of the ancient city having been used in filling up the canals and levelling the inequalities. The plan of the city was designed by Cortez, who showed as much taste and skill in founding and building up the queen city of a future empire, as he had shown prowess in laying that of a past one in the dust. The buildings are constructed of stone, and have flat roofs, covered with brick or tiles strongly cemented so as to make them fire and water proof, and are surrounded by parapets, which make the houses serve as castles.

The *Plaza mayor*, or great square, is one of the finest to be seen in any metropolis. It contains twelve acres, and is paved with hewn stone, and many an army, in war and in peace, has manœvered on this splendid parade ground. On the east side of this square is the Cathedral, occupying the site of the great idol temple, where human victims used to be offered up to their horrid deities, and, as a writer remarks, as if to complete the triumphs of the cross the foundations of the Cathedral are laid upon the broken images of the Aztec gods. On the

north side extending the entire length of the square is the Palace; formerly the palace of the Viceroy; since, the palace of the Emperor, the President or the Dictator, as the case happened to be. It is 500 feet long and 350 wide. But a small portion of it is appropriated to the use of the President. The building contains the halls of the Senate and house of Deputies; the offices of the different departments of war, state treasury &c. Connected with the palace is a botanic garden; but according to the descriptions it compares but poorly with the splendid gardens of Montezuma. On the south side of the great square are shops and private dwellings, and on the west a row of very high substantial houses, the second stories of which project over the side walk, and the lower stories are occupied by the principle retail merchants of the city. The most of these houses were built by Cortez, who, as it appears by this, had the good judgment to select the best part of the city for himself. Many of the finest buildings in the city are still owned by his descendants. Nearly all the houses in the city are built in the form of hollow squares, with open courts surrounded by colonades which are adorned with plants and flowers.

Besides the Palace, the Cathedral and seventy or eighty other churches, there are several other public buildings well constructed with a pure style of architecture. The Minería, or college of engineers, is a splendid edifice. The Acordada, or public prison, is a large substantial structure, fitted to contain about 1300 prisoners. The Theatres are of considerable size. The Plaza de Toros, for the exhibition of Bull-fights, is a great amphitheatre capable of accommodating ten or twelve thousand spectators. The great Cigar Manufactory belonging to the government is an immense establishment, which supplies the whole legitimate demand of the country for cigars. The Museum contains antique paintings, the armor of Cortez, Aztec manuscripts, Images and other antiquities.

The streets are wide clean and airy, crossing each other at right angles, and so straight and level that from almost any point in the city a person may look through on either hand, and see the fertile valley and the distant mountains. Out side the city is a broad street above a mile in length, and bordered on each side by double rows of beautiful trees. It is called the Paseo, and is the great resort of persons in carriages and on horseback, and is so wide that a procession of carriages may be passing on each side and troops of horsemen between. A gentleman states that he thinks he has seen as many as a thousand carriages and five hundred horsemen on the Paseo at one time. Here is a great display of splendid carriages and harnesses, and caparisoned steeds, with their riders gaily dressed in their roundabouts trimmed with lace and gold. It is said that one millionaire occasionally appears in a saddle that cost five thousand dollars. The ladies in their carriages pass leisurely along, blessing the cavaliers with their bewitching glances, and sometimes gracefully saluting them with their fans. The cavaliers curb in their prancing steeds, which, when opposite certain carriages, become somewhat ungovernable and oblige their riders to display feats of horsemanship! It is said that friendship and love are thus cultivated on the Paseo, sometimes for years without a single interview indoors.

Another place of resort is the Alameda, or public walk. This is an extensive common or park west of the city, surrounded by a carriage road, and intersected by paved walks bordered with trees, and converging to the centre, where there is a circular area with beautiful jets of water and a statue of the goddess of liberty. Here too may be seen the beauty and the gaiety of the city. Soldiers and generals in uniform, priests in their gowns, and gay young men with their pretty brunetts, whose dark eyes out flash the diamonds that adorn their persons.

There are also in the city several *portales*,

or covered colonades, lined with shops and stalls, and forming a favorite evening promenade long after the Alameda and Paseo have ceased to be frequented. The *environs* also on a fine moonlight evening present a very lively scene of bustle and gaiety; hundreds of canoes of various sizes, mostly with awnings, and crowded with native Indians or *Mestizos*, are seen passing in every direction along the lake and canals; each boat with its guitar player at the stern, and some of the party singing or dancing.

The promenades and places of public resort are frequented the year round, as the inhabitants are not, like us, kept in-doors half or three fourths of the year by the inclemency of the weather. A writer observes that in the two years he was there, he never saw any frost. The houses have no fire-places, and no fuel is used except to cook with. The climate it is said is delightful, it rarely being 'so warm that you need to take your coat off, or so cool that you need to button it.'

The population of the city of Mexico is variously stated from 150,000 to 200,000. They are a motley race. Perhaps 70,000 are of Spanish origin, 40,000 pure-blooded Indians, and the remainder of all possible shades, from the copper color of the native to the light olive shade of the Spaniard.

We have heard a great deal about the wealth of the churches in Mexico. Mr. Thompson thus speaks of the subject:

'The cathedral which occupies one side of the great square is 500 feet long by 420 wide, and is surmounted by two towers ornamented with pilasters and statues. Like all of the other churches in the city it is built in the gothic style. The walls, of several feet thickness are made of unhewn stone and lime. Upon entering it, one is apt to recall the wild fictions of the Arabian nights; it seems as if the wealth of empires was collected there. The clergy of Mexico do not, for obvious reasons, desire that their wealth should be made known to its full extent; they are not therefore disposed to give very

full information upon the subject, or to exhibit the gold and silver vessels, vases, precious stones, and other forms of wealth; quite enough however is exhibited to strike the beholder with wonder. The first object that presents itself on entering the cathedral is the altar, near the centre of the building; it is made of highly wrought and highly polished silver, and covered with a profusion of ornaments of pure gold. On each side of this altar runs a balustrade, enclosing a space about eight feet wide and eighty or a hundred feet long. The balusters are about four feet high, and four inches thick in the largest part, the hand-rail from six to eight inches wide. Upon the top of this hand-rail, at the distance of six or eight feet apart, are human images beautifully wrought, and about two feet high. All of these, the balustrade, hand-rail and images, are made of a compound of gold, silver and copper—more valuable than silver. I was told that an offer had been made to take this balustrade, and replace it with another of exactly the same size and workmanship of pure silver, and to give half a million of dollars besides. There is much more of the same balustrade in other parts of the church; I should think in all of it not less than three hundred feet.

As you walk through the building on either side, there are different departments all filled from the floor to the ceiling, with paintings, statues, vases, huge candlesticks, waiters, and a thousand other articles made of gold or silver. This too is only the every day display of articles of least value; the more costly are stored away in chests and closets. What must it be when all these are brought out, with the immense quantities of precious stones which the church is known to possess?

And this is only one of the churches of the city of Mexico, where there are between sixty and eighty others, and some of them possessing little less wealth than the cathedral; and it must also be remembered that all the other large cities, such as Puebla,

Guadalajara, Guanaxauto, Valadollid, Zatecas, Durango, San Louis Potosi, have each a proportionate number of equally gorgeous establishments.

But the immense wealth which is thus collected in the churches is not by any means all or even the largest portion of the wealth of the Mexican church and clergy. They own very many of the finest houses in Mexico and other cities, (the rents of which must be enormous) besides valuable real estate all over the republic. Almost every person leaves a bequest in his will for masses for his soul (or those of his friends;) this constitutes an encumbrance upon the estate, and thus nearly all the estates of the small proprietors are mortgaged to the church. The property held by the church in mortmain is estimated at fifty millions.'

Gilliam, in his 'Travels in Mexico,' states that when he was in the cathedral in the capital, a man climbed with a ladder upon the huge silver chandelier, and walked around upon it with the utmost ease and lighted the tapers. Again he says, 'as the visitor enters the cathedral he is overwhelmed by the number of the saints and the angels that strike his view.'

Brantz Mayer speaks as follows of some of the furniture in the cathedral at Puebla:

'The great chandelier' of silver weighs *tons*. The cost of cleansing it merely, a few years since, was *four thousand dollars*. The candelabras surrounding the platform before the altar are of silver and gold, and so ponderous that a strong man could neither move nor lift them. To the right of the altar is a figure of the Virgin Mary, near the size of life, dressed in the richest embroidered satin, with a string of the largest pearls hanging from her neck below her knees. Around her brow is clasped a crown of gold inlaid with emeralds, and her waist is bound with a zone of diamonds, from the centre of which blaze numbers of enormous brilliants.' 'In the cathedral in Mexico,' he continues, 'is an image of the Virgin of Remedios, who enjoys

the exclusive right to three petticoats; one embroidered with pearls, another with emeralds, and the third with diamonds, the value of which, I am credibly informed, is not less than three millions of dollars. Around this splendid mine of wealth are half naked Indians, gaping with surprise, or kneeling to the figure of some favorite saint—the misery of the worshippers in painful contrast with the splendor of the shrine.'

Thus the clergy having the wealth and being the keepers of the consciences of the nation, are all powerful; and bold is the President or the party that dares lay hands on what is considered consecrated property. Gomez Farias, in 1834, proposed to the Mexican Congress to confiscate the church property; but a revolution overthrew the administration and the measure was prevented. He estimated the total value of the property and possessions of the church at 160 millions of dollars. Farias was then Vice President under Santa Anna. By a remarkable revolution of circumstances, they too have held the same offices this year; and while Santa Anna was in the north attending to General Taylor, Farias, then acting President, wishing to obtain some of the church funds to prosecute the war, became so odious to the priestly party, that a civil war broke out in the capital. Santa Anna was obliged to hasten back from Buena Vista to quell the tumult, and Farias was ruled out of office.

Such is the fate of every man and every movement that encounters the power of the priesthood. At the commencement of the revolution in 1810, the priests were opposed to it; the attempt failed. At the end of another ten years, it became the interest of the clergy to separate from Spain; the revolution was completed. Iturbide was proclaimed emperor, and in 1821 Mexico became an independent nation.'

Such is the power of the Catholic clergy in Mexico—a power incompatible with free institutions. And this is the religion established by law to the exclusion of all others.

None but catholics,' says Mr. Thompson, are allowed to be buried in the regular burial grounds, and if buried anywhere else, there is no security that the sacredness of the grave of one regarded as an infidel will not be molested. To the disgrace of Mexico, the rights of sepulture have to be secured by treaty, to foreigners who are not catholics. Two of the Texian prisoners died at the Puente Nacional; one of them to protect his corpse from violation, professed the Catholic faith; the other, a very gallant and fine young man, Lieutenant Sevey, refused to do so. It was with great difficulty that his friends could obtain the privilege of burial for him, which was at last accomplished by a bribe of 50 dollars to the priest.'

Along with the christian religion the Inquisition was introduced into Mexico by the Spaniards; a fit successor and substitute, it would seem, for the bloody system of human sacrifices by the Aztecs. There was, however, as Mr. Prescott remarks, this difference, that to be devoted to the gods in sacrifice was ennobling to the victim and opened a sure passage to paradise, whereas the torture of the stake was more severe than the sacrificing knife, and the inquisition branded its victims with infamy in this world, and assigned them to everlasting perdition in the next. The inquisition continued till 1822, when, to his honor be it spoken, it was abolished by Iturbide.

The better educated of the Mexicans are of course acquainted with the history and affairs of other countries, and understand the relative position occupied by their own and other nations. But probably nine-tenths of the people, shut up within their unhealthy fasts and the uncivilized regions of the north and south, and having little or no light from the press or general education, are nearly ignorant of the rest of the world, and regard it as once did the Chinese; who considered as outlandish all that part of the earth beside of the celestial empire; the English are a clan of islanders, so low in the scale

of barbarism as to be governed by a *woman*, one Victoria.

Mr. Gilliam says: 'The egotism and love of country of the Mexicans is unparalleled. While he thinks his native land the best on the globe, his opinion of himself does not degenerate; for he believes that his people are the most learned and pious in the world; hence his prejudice against foreigners and opposition to improvement. When a foreigner has embraced all his sentiments and maxims, and in everything fashioned himself after his ways, he will then be tolerated, as all proselytes are, by the opinionated and bigoted, as having been redeemed from ignorance and superstition.'

In speaking of the Catholic church in Mexico, it must be borne in mind that it is there in the same backward state as the society in general, and partakes of the darkness in which it has helped to enshroud the people. Spain herself has set Mexico an example in scattering the useless hordes of church wealth; and the liberal policy of the present Pope even, has left the Mexican church altogether in the rear; and many of the remarks made respecting the catholic establishment in Mexico, by no means apply to the more enlightened and liberal branch of that church in the United States.

To show what relics of paganism still remain in the Mexican church, the following incident is related by a lady writer in Mexico, in 1840. She says: 'All the Mexicans, at present, men and women, are engaged in what is called the *desagravios*, or a public penance performed at this season in the churches, during thirty-five days.' By special favor she and a few friends were admitted into the gallery as spectators. 'The women attended church in the morning. The severest of their penance consisted in kneeling, with their arms extended in the form of a cross, uttering groans; a most painful posture for any length of time.' In the evening the men assembled. 'The penitence of the men,' remarks the writer, 'is most severe,

their sins no doubt being proportionally greater than those of the women.' The priest made a spirited exhortation, and then said, 'My brothers, when Christ was fastened to the pillar by the Jews, he was *scourged*.' Suddenly the church was darkened, and 'the sound of hundreds of scourges was heard descending upon the bare flesh. Before the end of ten minutes the sound became *splashing* from the blood that was flowing. Suppressed groans were heard. This horrible flagellation continued half an hour; when the monk rang a little bell and called upon them to desist, assuring them that Heaven would be satisfied. But in their zeal the sound of the lashing became the louder, the floor was covered with blood; but at length the sound grew fainter and fainter, and finally died away, as if from mere exhaustion!'

Possibly some of the chivalrous young men of our country have embarked in the conquest of Mexico, allured, as were the cavaliers under Cortez, by the golden treasures of this sunny land; if so they would do well not to put themselves under General Scott, for better would it be for them to fall into the hands of the Mexicans, than with their pockets full of plunder, to encounter the stern old general. Heaven forbid that our countrymen should imitate the example of the Spaniards of old, in plundering this fair land. But if the pressure of the present war shall oblige the Mexican government and priesthood to open these above-ground mines, and to coin and throw into the circulating medium of the world, these hoarded heaps of precious metals and barbaric ornaments, which have been for three centuries accumulating, and which are as useless as they are inconsistent with *His* worship, who was born in a manger, and had not where to lay his head; if necessity should thus curtail the wealth of the church and consequently its political power, and it should be obliged to grant a little of that toleration which our constitution guarantees equally to all—if, I say, these shall be the effects, the present war,

with its many calamities will not be without its beneficial results.

POPULATION.

The population of Mexico is estimated about 8 millions. The classes of the population are singularly varied, and are characterised by more striking distinctions than those of any other country. First may be named the Europeans, as they were styled natives of Spain. This class never numbered more than 80,000 in the palmy days of the Viceroy, yet this small fraction governed the country for the three hundred years of colonial existence. Since the independence of the country the other classes have taken their revenge on those once so proud of their European blood, and they now have as much influence in political matters as formerly the Spanish Americans.

The second class, are the *creoles*, or Americans as they prefer to call themselves; they are of the pure Spanish blood, but born in Mexico. They are the wealthiest and most powerful class of the population; and number about a million and a half. They are the ruling class and govern the other 6 1-2 millions.

Third, the Indians or native Mexicans constituting the great mass of the rural laborers, and supposed to amount to about 2 millions or one half of the entire population.

Fourth, the *Meztizos*, or half breeds of Spanish and Indians—which M^r. Calderon says is the handsomest race in Mexico. They together with the other mixtures of Indian and Spanish, and a few Negroes, are supposed to amount to about two millions. When the white was formerly in Mexico a badge of rank, and almost a title of nobility. When a Mexican considered himself slighted by another, he would ask, 'Am I not as white as yourself?' And when the Spanish government wished to honor one of mixed blood for distinguished services, they passed a

see that 'he should be considered white.'

By the constitution of Mexico all classes, without distinction of race or color enjoy the same political rights. This is the letter of the law, but there is the same propensity here as elsewhere to adopt

'That good old rule, that simple plan,
That they should take who have the power.
And they should keep who can.'

The ancient Mexicans, in point of civilization were far in advance of all the other Indian nations in the new world; but still they were only the better sort of barbarians.—Three centuries of oppression have effaced the nobler traits of their character. In the language of Prescott, 'The American Indian has something peculiarly sensitive in his nature. He shrinks instinctively from the rude touch of a foreign hand. Even when this foreign influence comes in the form of civilization, he seems to shrink and pine away beneath it. It has been so with the Mexicans. Under the Spanish dominion their numbers have silently melted away.— Their energies are broken. They no longer tread their mountain plains with the conscious independence of their ancestors. In their faltering step, and meek and melancholy aspect we read the sad characters of the conquered race. * * * *

Their civilization was of the hardy character which belongs to the wilderness. The noble virtues of the Aztec were all his own. They refused to submit to European culture to be engrafted on a foreign stock. His outward form, his complexion, his lineaments were substantially the same. But the moral characteristics of the nation, all that constitute its individuality as a race, are effaced forever.'

Indolence, blind submission to their superstitious, and gross superstition are the characteristics of the present Indian race in Mexico.

'The form of their religion,' says Mculloch, 'is changed, and that is nearly all; they take the same childish delight in the

idle ceremonies and processions of the Catholic church as they once took in the fantastic mummeries of their aboriginal idolatry. They are scattered over the country as laborers, distributed into villages, or else live in the towns as artisans, workmen or beggars. In a few instances they have accumulated property, and acquired respectability; but in general they are indolent, ignorant and poverty-stricken.'

'Mexico,' says Chevalier, 'is a country so rich that famine scarcely visits even the most indolent. In the *tierras calientes* (hot regions on the coast,) and even on the plateau, the natives are content to dwell with their families in a cabin of bamboo trellis-work, so slight as scarcely to hide them from the stranger's gaze, and to sleep either on mere mats, or at best on beds made of leaves and brush wood. Their dress consists simply of a pair of drawers,* and *sarape*, which serves for a cloak by day and a counterpane by night.— Each has his horse, a sorry beast, which feeds at large in the open country; and a whole family of Indians are supplied with food by bananas, chili, and maize, raised almost without labor in a small enclosure round the hut. Labor indeed occupies but a small portion of the Indian's time, which is chiefly spent in drinking *pulque*, sleep, or singing to his wretched mandolin hymns in honor of Our Mother of Guadalupe, and occasionally carrying votive chaplets to deck the altar of his village church. Thus he passes his life in dreamy indifference and utterly careless of the ever-reviving commotions by which the peace of Mexico is disturbed. The assassinations and robberies which the almost impotent government allows to be committed with impunity on the public roads, and even in sight of the capital, are to him only matters for conversation, the theme of a tale or ditty. And why should he trouble himself about it? Having nothing in the world but the dress in which he stands, his lance, spurs and guitar, he has no fear of thieves; nor will the poniard of the assassin touch him,

if he himself, drunk with pulque or chingarrito, do not first use his own.'

After becoming acquainted with the character of the heterogenous races that make up the Mexican population, we shall not be so much surprised at the state of misrule and anarchy that prevail there. What sort of a democracy could be expected from them.—The government is called republican, but it is merely a government of priests and military chieftains. But neither gunpowder nor purgatory can restrain the ever-renewing commotions of an ignorant and degraded population. There can be no stronger proof of the incurable anarchy of the country than the fact that while their land was invaded by hostile armies, they were shooting each other in their own capital. For the past forty years Mexico has been but a school and theatre of war. Generals are as plenty as corporals and captains of militia in New England, and to be a soldier is only to be in fashion. And if the Generals do not find employment for them by getting up a revolution, they endeavor to relieve the tedium of the short intervals of peace by turning robbers or by doing anything else, excepting *work*. Three or four years since, Colonel Yanes, one of Sana Anna's favorite officers, was executed for robbing and murdering the Swiss consul, in his own house in the city of Mexico. The great road from Vera Cruz to Mexico, in its mountainous parts, even in times of peace, is infested by banditti; and to have the stage coach stopped and the passengers plundered is almost a matter of course, unless the travellers go well armed or employ an escort of soldiers. Mr. Cushing, on his return from China, across Mexico, was robbed, it is said, of money and valuable manuscript notes on the Chinese Empire. It is to be hoped that the gallant General will be able to recover the papers lost by the accomplished scholar, and that he will obtain due satisfaction for the insult offered to the peaceful minister from the celestial regions.

From a notice of the population of Mexi-

co we see how incapable they are of maintaining a contest with a country like our own. Our number of inhabitants at the present time cannot be less than 20 millions of the most hardy and enterprising race on the globe. Mexico has 8 millions, of these less than two millions are whites, about two are the mixed races, and the remaining four millions, or one half of the whole, are Indians.

The principal officers of the army are nearly all, of the Spanish portion of the inhabitants; occasionally a Mestizo or Mulatto, and it is said that one of the Generals at Cerro Gordo was a Mulatto. The soldiers are made up of whites, mixed, and Indians. 'The soldiers of the Mexican army,' says Mr. Thompson, 'are generally collected by sending out *recruiting* detachments into the mountains, where they hunt the Indians in their dens and caverns, and bring them in chains to Mexico; there is scarcely a day that droves of these miserable and more than half naked wretches are not seen thus chained together and marching through the streets to the barracks, where they are scourged and dressed in a uniform made of linen cloth of serge, and are occasionally drilled—which drilling consists mainly in teaching them to march in column through the street. There is not one in ten of these soldiers who has ever seen a gun, nor one in a hundred who has ever fired one before he was brought in to the barracks.

'I do not,' he continues, 'think that the Mexicans are deficient in courage; or it might be more properly said that they are indifferent to danger or the preservation of a life which is really so worthless to most of them.'

Mr. Thompson's statements, in regard to the inferiority of the Mexicans to the Americans in battle, are very strong but from residence of two years among them, and himself enjoying the title of *General* as well as honorable, he ought to be good authority.—He says: 'They are generally diminutive in

stature and deficient in physical strength, being unaccustomed to labor or exercise of any sort. The Mexican army, and more particularly their cavalry, may do very well to fight each other, but in any conflict with our own or European troops, it would not be a battle but a massacre. The American corpse, from the superior size of their horses, would cover twice as much ground, and the obstruction offered by the Mexicans, on their small and scrawny ponies would scarcely cause their horses to stumble in riding over them. To say nothing of the greater inequality of the men themselves, five to one at least in individual combat, and more than twice that in battle. The infantry would be found even more impotent. Their arms, too, the remarks, are generally worthless English muskets which have been condemned and thrown aside, and are purchased for almost nothing and sold to the Mexican government. Their powder too, is equally bad; in the last battle between Santa Anna and Bustamente (in 1842) which lasted the whole day, not one cannon ball in a thousand reached the enemy—they fell about half way between the opposing armies.

This comparison between the Mexican and American troops was written before the commencement of the present war, and the results of the different conflicts have not gone far towards disproving the correctness of the statements.

When we take into view this difference between Mexican and American forces, the Mexicans have shown themselves brave and patriotic. Palo Alto and Resaca de Palma, Monterey, Buena Vista, and Cerro Gordo, bear testimony that, if they could not conquer, they could die for their country. The Castle of St. Juan yielded to a necessity that appeared more strongly to them, than a bombardment of its walls would have done.

The Castle of St. Juan de Ulua, was commenced by the Spaniards in 1692, sixty-four years after their arrival on the shores of Mexico. It occupies a small island about

one third of a mile from the city of Vera Cruz; it is built of a red coral or madrepore, a stone obtained from the sea and islands near. Its walls are four or five yards thick, and the side fronting the city is fifty-four rods long, and the north side about two thirds that length. Its form is that of a polygon, on its north angle is a tower, in which is a brilliant revolving light, seventy-nine feet above the water. The castle is said to have cost forty millions of dollars. It seems hardly possible, but it is an immense and massive structure; its foundations are laid deep in the water, and for nearly three centuries its black looking walls have resisted all the force of the stormy waves that beat continually against them.—This celebrated fortress whose batteries mounted at one time 177 guns of various calibre, has now been taken for the fourth time.

It was taken the first time by surprise, in 1568, by a small fleet commanded by the pirate Juan Aquinas Acle. The second capture was also by a bucanier named Lurencello, on the night of the 17th of May, 1693. The third time, it was bombarded and taken by the French, as has been stated, near the close of 1838; the magazine blew up or they would not have succeeded so readily. But now the star spangled banner of the American Union floats on its battlements.

Vera Cruz is a walled town, well built, and its towers, cupolas and battlements give it an imposing appearance from the sea. It has a climate in the warm season fatal to strangers. When they land there and post directly to Jalapa, they often carry the infection of the *vomito* with them, and die in a day. The badness of the water, the surrounding plains and hills of burning sand, contribute to render it the focus of the yellow fever. Many of our brave young men who compose the garrisons of the town and castle, will leave their bones in the land of the stranger.

According to accounts the landing of General Scott's army at Vera Cruz presented one of the grandest specimens of the pomp

and circumstance of war ever beheld on the western continent. The army numbered 12,000 men. These with their cannon, baggage wagons, and horses, covered an extensive area. The fleet had commenced its fire upon the castle and town to divert the attention of the garrisons and partially protect the landing of the army. The decks of the foreign vessels in the port were crowded with spectators eager to witness the magnificent panorama of war. Only a part of the army could be landed at a time with the seventy boats which were obliged to be used on account of the sloping sandy beach.

The water for a mile was covered with surf boats rowed by Commodore Perry's sturdy seamen, each boat laden with cavalry and cannon and men in battle trim, with their hands on their weapons, expecting the enemy would meet them before they reached the shore. The eager troops leaped on the beach while the boats had hardly touched ground, and some even dashed through the water breast deep; all the while the old castle was belching forth its fire and smoke, and the black war ships wrapped in sulphurous clouds were answering back its thunder.

When the first division of the army had gained the Mexican soil, their comrades on the fleet swung their plumed caps and gave three tremendous cheers, so long and loud as to swell above the roar of artillery and send their echoes far over and sea and shore.

And when the army had all landed, what an imposing array—baggage trains and horses, brazen cannon, and black iron mortars, and awful Paxians; artillery, infantry, cav-

alry, as far as the eye could reach—a forest of bristling bayonets, and waving plumes, and floating banners.

In the reports from the scenes of the war we generally hear but one side of the story, and the Mexicans, defeated in every contest, we may look upon as cowardly and contemptible. But considering their repeated reverses they show a persevering determination worthy of admiration. The city was not surrendered till their wives and children had fallen around them and a third of the town had been battered to the ground. The castle was given up because its surrender was required in connection with that of the city, although hardly a ball had been thrown upon the impregnable fortress.

Many were the deeds of valor performed by the Mexicans during the bombardment; and on the surrender several officers were released without parole, or their pledge not to take up arms again. While the batteries were playing with awful activity, and throwing balls and shells at the rate of a dozen a minute upon the devoted city, one of the balls cut down a flag; instantly a young Mexican officer mounted the wall, and held the banner floating in the air till a new flag-staff could be procured. The daring feat elicited a shout of admiration from the American lines. He was one of the officers released without parole; and improving the privilege thus granted, he was afterwards among the foremost in the Mexicans ranks at Cerro Gordo, where he bravely fell as the hero falls, fighting for his kindred and country.

CHAPTER VII.

AGRICULTURE—AMUSEMENTS—MANNERS—FEMALE EDUCATION, AND BEAUTY.

Haciendas or Estates—Their Vast Extent. Orange Groves. Montezuma's Cypress.—Farming Tools. A Mexican Cart. Mules instead of Rail-roads. Amusements. Bull-fights, a Description of. Branding of Bulls, a Great Entertainment. Great Gambling Festival of Saint Augustin. The Cock-pit, and the Spectators. Influence of Gaming on the Mexicans. Anecdote of a Regiment of Cocks. Mexican Character. Their Good Qualities. Etiquette. Cordiality of Manners. Visiting. Costumes. Fans. Lcperos, or Fag-end of the City. Evangelistas, or City Letter-writers. Style of Female Beauty. Mexican versus English and French Ladies. Amiability, Irresistible Charms. Female Education. A Mexican Editor's Opinion of his Country-women.—Politeness of the Mexicans. Everything 'at your Disposal.' Mistake of a Gentleman who thought a Lady 'Truly his.' Anecdote of a Mexican who lost a Harness by placing it 'at the Service' of a Frenchman. Specimen of Doctors' Politeness, a Lesson to the Profession!

The *Haciendas* are the mansions and estates of the wealthy; and many of them are of vast extent. In the north part of the state of New Leon is the estate of Jaral, containing 50,000 square miles. His live stock amounts to 300,000 head. Thirty thousand sheep are sent annually to the market in the city of Mexico, and as many goats are killed on this princely domain. The Indians live on these great estates, in little villages, or scattered huts, nominally owning their patches of land, and hired as laborers by the proprietors.

Madame Calderon, in her 'Life in Mexico,' speaking of a hacienda, says it is 90 miles long and 51 wide.

Another one, belonging to the Duke de Morteleone, produced 750,000 pounds of

sugar annually. It had on it a coffee plantation also, with a great mill for cleaning the beans from the chaff. There were 400 men employed exclusive of boys; one hundred horses and a large number of mules. The laborers were Indians and were paid from two and a half to six and a half rials (or 31 to 75 cents) a day.

'The property is very extensive,' she continues, 'containing the fields of sugar cane, plains for cattle, and the pretty plantations of coffee, so green and spring-like, this one containing upwards of 50,000 young plants, all fresh and vigorous, besides a great deal of uncultivated ground, abandoned to the deer and hares and quails, of which there was a great abundance.' In reference to the house on this plantation, she says :

'As for the interior of these haciendas, they are all pretty much alike so far as we have seen; a great stone building, solid enough to stand a siege, with floors of painted brick, large deal tables, wooden benches, painted chairs, whitewashed walls, and numberless empty rooms.' Indeed it would be of no use to have them furnished in a costly manner as they are liable at any time to be converted into barracks.

In describing a visit to another hacienda, the same pleasant writer remarks in a letter addressed to Boston, February 1841: 'In the evening we drove to the orange grove, where three thousand lofty trees are ranged in avenues, literally bending under the weight of their golden fruit and snowy blossom. I never saw a more beautiful sight. Each tree is perfect and lofty as a forest tree. The ground under their broad shadows is strewn with thousand of oranges, dropping in their ripeness, and covered with the white fragrant blossoms. Here too were orchards of loaded fruit trees; and melons, tamarind, citron, custard apple, and almost an infinity of the brightest and most beautiful flowers. What prodigality of Nature! The air was soft and balmy, and actually heavy with fragrance. All round ran streams of the most delicious clear water, trickling with sweet music, and now and then a little cardinal like a bright red ruby would perch on the trees. We pulled bouquets of orange blossoms, jessamine, lilies, double red roses and lemon leaves, and wished we could have transported them to you, to those lands, where winter is now wrapping the world in his white winding-sheet.'

Among the forest trees of Mexico is the beautiful and majestic cypress. Humboldt speaks of one which measured seventy-three feet in circumference—a vegetable Methuselah. There are several enormous trees of this kind at Chapultepec, three miles west of the capital; one known by the name of 'Montezuma's Cypress,' is forty-one feet in circumference, a tall stately tree, venerable with

vines and moss, and old when Montezuma was a boy and played beneath its branches.

Notwithstanding the advantages Mexico possesses in point of climate and soil, much of the land is unoccupied, and tracts, once fertile, have become sterile for want of cultivation. Their agricultural implements are of the rudest description. The plough such as was used two thousand years ago, simply a wedge of wood. Such a thing as a rail-road, is not known, and doubtless an army of modern Mexicans would be panic stricken and routed by a locomotive, as were the natives by the cavalry of Cortez.

The following description of the farming tools of the Mexicans is by a correspondent of the St. Louis Republican, in 1846. Perhaps some allowance should be made for the fact that the primitive machines which he describes, were found in the Northern provinces where the people have not advanced quite so far in their knowledge of the 'useful metals' as in the more populous and central portions of the Republic:

'The farming tools of the Mexicans are of the rudest possible description. It has been well said, that they seem to be opposed to change of every kind, except in their governors and government. The same utensils which were used by Cortez, at the conquest in the sixteenth century, are used at this day in Mexico.

Riding, on the 10th of December, up the valley in which Parras is situated, I came to a field where they were sowing wheat. The sower was sowing the wheat broadcast on the unploughed ground. Twenty-three ploughs followed each other, on the same land ploughing the wheat in. A contrivance for a harrow, levelled the ground after the ploughs. Each plough was drawn by two oxen. The ploughs were of the same pattern used by the Romans two thousand years since. They were made of the fork of a small tree, one prong of which answered for the beam, and was cut long enough to fasten the oxen to; the other prong was cut

off about four feet long, and sharpened at the end, and a single stick fastened into the fork and projecting back, made the handle. This was the plough—lock, stock and barrel. When a forked tree cannot be found, the short stick is morticed, into the long one. The short prong was the coulter—the long one the beam. This was fastened by a raw-hide thong to the ox-yoke, which in turn, was fastened in front of, and to the horns of the oxen, by another raw-hide thong. The handle was held by a peon, who was armed in the other hand with a long pole, with a sharp goad in the end of it, which he unsparingly plunged into the oxen to quicken their speed, or to change their direction.

Some of the better ploughs have the coulter shod with a piece of iron, resembling a bull tongue, eight inches long, and tapering from thence to two inches at the point. This is the greatest improvement made upon the plough.

The ground is never thoroughly broken up, and it is only scratched in furrows a few inches deep. Efforts have been made to introduce better ploughs and some have been brought from the United States. But the Mexicans did not like to use them. They were soon broken or thrown aside as useless, because no one would plough with them.

The harrow was as simple a contrivance as the plough, and consisted of a single stick of square timber, the size of a joist, fastened in two places with a raw-hide rope to keep it square to the front, and drawn by a yoke of oxen to level the ground.

The *metate*, or stone corn-mill, used for preparing *tortillas*, is the same article that was used by the Indians at the first conquest of Mexico.

Their hoes are clumsy, rough machines, decidedly worse than the meanest hoe in Old Virginia—and that is about as bad a character as I know how to give them.

Their axes are long and clumsy, with blades about three inches wide, and resemble the upper part of a pick-axe or grubbing-hoe.

It looks remarkable that they should ever be able to peck a tree down with one. The great superiority of the American axe is so evident, that some few venturesome persons have commenced the use of them.

A Mexican cart is the most unique of all their inventions. It has not a piece of iron in or about it. It is constructed entirely of wood and raw hide. The axletree is a rough-hewed log, rounded at the ends. The wheels are made of knotty live oak, two feet and a half through the hub, and trimmed down to seven inches in the tread. Two slabs of the same width are pinned on to the centre piece, to give rotundity to the wheel. A heavy tongue is morticed into the axle, and has a wooden pin inserted through the upper end, by which to fasten it to the yoke. The body is made of wooden poles, inserted into round saplings eight feet long. This is used for hauling wood, &c.—When they wish to haul corn, cornstalks are placed across the wooden poles, and lashed tightly to them with strips of raw hide. When wheat or shelled corn is to be carried, they line the inside of the stalk bed with matting made of the *palmita*, which resembles the material of which gunny bags are made.

The ox yoke is a piece of timber five inches wide and three inches thick, slightly indented near each end. This is tied in front and across the horns, with a piece of rough raw hide. Another piece fastens the yoke tightly to the tongue of the cart. A second yoke of cattle is usually fastened to the cart. A strong rope of raw hide, of sufficient length, fastens their yoke to the tongue of the cart.

The driver moves along by the side of the cart, sometimes on foot and sometimes riding an ugly, ill-natured looking mustang, with a long ox-goad in his hand. He uses this very freely, and when he wishes to 'file left,' he pops his goad into the off ox, who screws his tail and runs around his fellow, and changes the direction of the cart. They move more briskly than American oxen. This is no won-

der, for they are all taught to 'walk Spanish.'

They haul very large loads in these carts, and travel as fast as horse teams usually do on a journey. A Mexican frequently carries his wife and children in these carts. He then puts his team into a run, sets up a shrill whistle, and moves off with the chorus produced by the outlandish *schreeching* of his Mexican cart.'

The internal commerce and the transportation from the sea-ports to the capital are carried on chiefly upon the backs of mules, and even the water in the city of Mexico, instead of being distributed by pipes as it easily might be, is brought into the suburbs by aqueducts, and then peddled through the streets in jugs and jars by Indians.

It is to be hoped that the plough-share and pruning hook will follow in the wake of the sword and spear, and that having given them lessons in war, the way will be open to instruct them in the arts of peace. Whether the present war be necessary or unnecessary, just or unjust, Providence will doubtless bring good out of it. The greatest improvement China has experienced for ages was effected by British cannon. So in case of Mexico; the tempest of fire, the glare of deadly missiles will sooner or later be succeeded by the milder light of knowledge and civilization, by a more assured tranquility, by a more tolerant and purer religion.

In regard to the character, social habits and amusements of Mexicans, I shall present the authority of those who have had the advantage of residing among them. As the books on the subject are somewhat bulky and consequently not in very general circulation; and one of the most interesting of them, 'Life in Mexico,' in two volumes, is nearly out of print, I cannot do better than to present the reader with some of the most interesting paragraphs of these works. There is a life and freshness in sketches drawn from personal observation which cannot be imparted by one who speaks only from the information

furnished by others. Particularly is this true in regard to the ladies and their accomplishments, where the writer should wield his pen while under the inspiration of their charms.

The Bull-fights are a very popular and fashionable entertainment in Mexico, as in Spain from whence they were introduced. The following graphic description of one of these exhibitions is from the pen of the pleasant authoress of 'Life in Mexico.'

'Fancy to yourself an immense amphitheatre, capable of accommodating 12,000 persons, the whole crowded almost to suffocation, the boxes filled with ladies in full dress and the seats below by gaily attired and most enthusiastic spectators—two military bands of music playing beautiful airs—an extraordinary variety of brilliant costumes, all lighted up by the eternally deep blue sky, ladies and peasants and officers in full uniform, and you may conceive that it must have been altogether a varied and curious spectacle.

About half past six, a flourish of trumpet announced the President, who came in uniform with his staff, and took his seat amidst the sound of martial music. Shortly the horsemen and footmen made their entry, saluting all round the arena, and were received with loud cheering.

The dress of the chief horseman of blue and silver was very superb and cost \$500.—The signal was given—the gates were thrown open, and a bull sprang into the arena. The footmen shook their colored scarfs at him, the horsemen poked at him with their lances. He rushed at the first and tossed up the scarfs which they threw at him, while the others, striking the horses, so that along with their riders they occasionally rolled in the dust; both however almost instantly recovered their equilibrium, in which there was no time to be lost. Then the footmen would throw fire-works, crackers adorned with streaming ribbons which stuck on his horns, and as he tossed his head, enveloped him in a blaze of fire. Occasionally the horseman

would catch hold of the bull's tail, and passing it under his own right leg, wheel the horse round, force the bull to gallop backwards and throw him on his face.

Maddened with pain, streaming with blood, stuck full of darts and covered with fireworks, the unfortunate beast went galloping round and round, plunging blindly at man and horse, and frequently trying to leap the barrier, but driven back by the waving hats and shouting of the crowd. At last as he stood at bay, and nearly exhausted the footman ran up and gave him the mortal blow, considered a peculiar proof of skill. The bull stopped as if he felt that his hour were come, staggered, made a few plunges at nothing, and fell. A finishing stroke and the bull expired.

The trumpets sounded, the music played. Four horses galloped in tied to a yoke to which the bull was fastened, and swiftly dragged out of the arena. This last part had a fine effect, reminding one of a Roman sacrifice. In a similar manner, eight bulls were done to death. The scene is altogether fine, the address amusing, but the wounding and tormenting of the bull is sickening, and as here the tips of his horns are blunted, one has more sympathy with him than with his human adversaries. It cannot be good to accustom a people to such bloody sights.—Yet let me confess, that though at first I covered my face and could not look, little by little I grew so much interested in the scene, that I could not take my eyes off of it, and I can easily understand the pleasure taken in these barbarous diversions by those accustomed to them from childhood.

The marking of bulls is another entertainment of the Mexicans.

'After early mass,' says the same writer, 'we set off for Santiago, where we intend to spend a week, to be present at the *Heraderos*—the marking of the bulls with a hot iron with the initial of the proprietor's name; stamping them with the badge of slavery—which is said to be an extraordinary scene; to

which all rancheros and Indians look forward with the greatest delight.

The next morning we went early to the *plaza de toros*. The day was fresh and exhilarating. All the country people from several leagues round were assembled, and the trees up to their very topmost branches presented a collection of bronze faces and black eyes, belonging to the Indians, who had taken their places there as comfortably as spectators in a one-shilling gallery. A platform opposite ours, was filled with the wives and daughters of agents and small farmers, little *rancheras*, with short white gowns and *reberos*. There was a very tolerable band of music, perched upon a natural orchestra. Bernado and his men were walking and riding about, and preparing for action. Nothing could be more picturesque than the whole scene.

Seven hundred bulls were driven in from the plains, bellowing loudly, so that the air was filled with their fierce music. The universal love which the Mexicans have for those sports, amounts to a passion. All their money is reserved to buy new dresses for this occasion, silver rolls or gold linings for their hats, or new deerskin pantaloons and embroidered jackets with silver buttons. The accidents that happen are innumerable, but nothing damps their ardor. *It beats for hunting*. The most striking part of the scene is the extraordinary facility which these men show in throwing the laso. The bulls being all driven into an enclosure—one after another, and sometimes two or three at a time were chosen from amongst them, and driven into the plaza, where they were received with shouts of applause if they appeared fierce, and likely to afford good sport, or of irony if they turned to fly, which happened more than once.

Three or four bulls are driven in. They stand for a moment, proudly reconnoitring their opponents. The horsemen gallop up, armed only with the laso, and with loud insulting cries of "*Ah toro!*" challenge them

to the contest. The bulls paw the ground, then plunge furiously at the horses, frequently wounding them at the first onset. Round they go in fierce gallop, bulls and horsemen, amidst the cries and shouts of the spectators. The horseman throws the laso. The bull shakes his head free of the cord, tosses his horns proudly, and gallops on. But his fate is inevitable. Down comes the whirling rope, and encircles his thick neck. He is thrown down struggling furiously, and repeatedly dashes his head against the ground in rage and despair. Then, his legs being also tied, the man with the hissing red-hot iron in the form of a letter, brands him on the side with the token of his dependence on the lord of the soil. Some of the bulls stand this martyrdom with Spartan heroism, and do not utter a cry, but others, when the iron enters their flesh, burst out into long bellowing roars, that seem to echo through the whole country. They are then loosened, get upon their legs again, and like so many branded Cains, are driven out into the country, to make way for others. Such roaring, such shouting, such an odor of singed hair and *biftek au naturel*, such playing of music and such wanton risks as were ran by the men!

I saw a toreador, who was always foremost in everything, attempting to drag a bull by the horns, when the animal tossed his head, and with one jerk of one horn, tore all the flesh off his finger to the very bone. The man coolly tore a piece off a handkerchief, shook the blood off his finger with a slight grimace, bound it up in a moment and dashed a way upon a new venture. One Mexican, extraordinarily handsome; with eyes like an eagle, but very thin and pale, is, they say, so covered from head to foot with wounds received in different bull-fights, that he cannot live long; yet this man was the most enthusiastic of them all. His master tried to dissuade him from joining in the sport this year; but he broke forth into such pathetic entreaties, conjuring him "by the life Señorita," &c., that he could not withhold his consent.

After an enormous number of bulls had been caught and *labelled*, we went to breakfast.

The people were assembled in circles under the trees, cooking fowls and boiling eggs in a gipsy fashion, in caldrons, at little fires made with dry branches; and the band, in its intervals of tortillas and pulque, favored us with occasional airs. After breakfast, we walked out amongst the Indians, who had formed a sort of temporary market, and were selling pulque, chia, roasted chestnuts, yards of baked meat, and every kind of fruit. We then returned to see a great bull-fight, which was followed by more *herrerados*—in short, spent the whole day amongst the *toros*, and returned to dinner at six o'clock, some in coaches, some on horseback. In the evening, all the people danced in a large hall; but at eleven o'clock I could look on no longer, for one of these days in the hot sun is very fatiguing. Nevertheless, at two in the morning, these men who had gone through such violent exercise, were still dancing jarabes.

For several days we lived amongst the bulls, &c. Not the slightest slackening in the eagerness of the men. Even a little boy of ten years old, mounted a young bull one day, and with great difficulty and at a great risk, succeeded in forcing him to gallop round the circle. His father looked on, evidently frightened to death for the boy, yet too proud of his youthful prowess to attempt to stop him.

At night, when I shut my eyes, I see before me visions of bulls' heads. Even when asleep I hear them roaring, or seem to listen to the shouts of "*Ah toro!*"

After the the Bull-fights we now insert an account of the Cock-fights and Gambling Festival of Saint Augustin!

'Shortly after my arrival in Mexico,' says the author of the Recollections, 'the great gambling feast of St. Augustin took place. I am not sufficiently learned upon the subject of Catholic saints to know why St. Augustin is the patron of gamblers, and his anniversary is celebrated by all sorts of games.

The village of San Augustin is about twelve miles from Mexico, and there this festival is celebrated. Every human creature in Mexico, high and low, old and young, who can get there, is certain to go. Rooms are engaged, and preparations made for weeks beforehand. Doubloons, which are generally worth only fifteen dollars and a quarter, as the festival approaches rise in value to sixteen and seventeen dollars. It is not genteel to bet anything but gold. The scene opens with cock-fighting, about twelve o'clock. It is attended by everybody. When I entered the cock-pit, Santa Anna and Gen. Bravo, with a large number of the most distinguished men in Mexico, and quite a large number of ladies of the highest circles, were already there. The master of ceremonies on the occasion walked into the pit, and exclaimed two or three times, 'Ave Maria purissima los gallos vienen'—'Hail, most pure Mary, the chicken-cocks are coming.' Whereupon a cock is brought in covered, and a challenge is proclaimed, *a l'outrance*, to all comers, which is very soon accepted. The fowls are then uncovered, and allowed to walk about the pit, that the spectators may see them, and select the one on which they choose to risk their money. Those in the seats call some of the numerous brokers who are always in attendance, and give them whatever sum of money they desire to bet, and designate their favorite cock. Before the fight commences, the broker returns and informs the person whose money he has received whether his bet has been taken. If he loses, he sees no more of the broker; but if he wins, he is perfectly sure to get his money. A small gratification is expected by the broker, but never asked for, if it is not voluntarily given. I have been surprised to see these fellows, who are often entrusted with the money of a dozen different persons, never make a mistake as to the person for whom the bet was made, nor the amount of it. And it is another evidence of what I have before remarked as to the honesty of that class of Mexicans, that they never

attempt to go off with the money, which they could so easily do, for it would be as impossible for a stranger to identify one of these Indians, as it would be to select a particular crow out of a flock of a hundred.

I saw on these occasions, a sign which I thought ominous—there was always the most vociferous shouting whenever Santa Anna's fowl lost his fight.

As soon as the cock-fighting is over, the gambling at monte commences. There are a great many public tables, and some private ones. It is at the latter only that Santa Anna plays. There are many tables where nothing but gold is bet, others where nothing but silver, and other tables again for copper.—The game is a perfectly fair one, and one at which cheating is, I should think, impossible.

There is some very small advantage in the game in favor of the bank. I think it is only this: if the bet is decided in favor of the better on the first turn, there is a very small deduction from the amount paid, an eighth, or perhaps a fourth. But there is another, and a much more important advantage to the bank, in this, as in all of these public games; men always double and bet high when they have won, and, generally speaking, if the bank wins one bet in three, the better has lost in the end. I had not seen one of these public games played for very many years until I went to Mexico, and only saw it twice there; but my own observation has fully satisfied me of the truth of what I have said, and I should rejoice to know that this suggestion had prevented any one person from indulging in those most pernicious of games, pernicious as all games of chances are. I was very much struck with one thing which I noticed. I have seen, I am sure, fifty thousand dollars on the tables at once, probably in fifty different piles, and belonging to as many different betters, and yet I never witnessed a dispute of any sort as to the ownership of any one of these piles. I have seen a sum which the person who bet had omitted to take up when he had won; no one claimed

it until it had increased to quite a large sum by winning double every time; and when, even, it would be asked whose bet it was, and thus announced that it was forgotten, no one would claim it.

The gravity and propriety of Spanish manners are never wanting, even at the gaming-table. I have seen men in the humbler walks of life lose several thousand dollars, and perhaps the last which they possessed, without a frown, or the slightest sign of emotion of any sort. Greatly pernicious as is the practice of gaming everywhere, and in all its forms, I do not think that it is anywhere so much so as in Mexico. The people of all mining countries are characteristically thriftless and improvident, but, I believe, no where more than in Mexico. There are very few instances in Mexico of men who have any idea of that certain competency which is the reward of industry in any employment, and the savings of even small earnings, whereby the small gains of one year swell those of the next, which is so well expressed in the maxim of Dr. Franklin, 'that the second hundred dollars is much easier made than the first, the first assisting to make the second.' Whilst they habitually postpone everything, *hasta mañana*, until to-morrow, they never think of making any provision for that to-morrow. If they ever do lay up money, it is for the purpose of attending the feast of San Augustin, and with the hope of winning a fortune with it. They hear of some one, perhaps, who has done so, but they do not think of the thousands who have lost.

There is a dance on the green in the evening, and another ball in the cock-pit at night, to which every one is admitted who is decently dressed and can pay for a ticket.—The first people in the city, of both sexes, are seen dancing with the most dissolute and depraved, not only in the same dance, but as partners. This feast lasts three or four days, and, from all that I saw, I should say that it is almost the only occasion when persons of

respectability in the city of Mexico gamble at all. Sometimes an evening is passed in playing at monte for fourpences, when not more than three or four dollars are lost by any one. I can only say that, with the exception of the annual feast of San Augustin, I never saw a pack of cards during my residence in Mexico, except on two occasions, when a game of whist was played at the houses of private gentlemen.'

All are on an equality at the cock-pit.—The President may be seen bending from his box and betting with a poor ragmuffin in the pit, Generals with their soldiers, and ladies with the gentlemen. Possibly some of these last bet as did the young lady and gentleman out in Ohio, in the Harrison campaign—if Harrison beat, he was to have her; if Van Buren beat, she was to have him!

There is a passionate fondness for cock-fighting in Mexico. A traveller stopping at the city of Guanajuato, was annoyed all night long by an incessant crowing. What to make of it he did not know; he had never heard the like, even after a political campaign in the United States. On sallying out after a sleepless night, he beheld more than a hundred cocks arranged on each side of the street, and fastened together by small ropes. The valiant birds, charged with Mexican pugnacity, had been exchanging their challenges during the night, and were only by their fetters prevented from joining in hostile encounter. They belonged to the Governor of the town, who was an extensive dealer in, roosters!

The following candid remarks on Mexican character, are from the interesting work of Brantz Mayer, Secretary of the U. S. Legation to Mexico, in 1841--2:

'I have adverted already in previous letters to the private character and domestic customs of the Mexicans, and confess, that I came to the country with opinions anything but favorable to the morals, tastes, or habits of the people. It was alleged, that they en-

tertained a positive antipathy to foreigners, and that the exclusive system of Spain, under which they were educated, had excited in them a distaste for innovation; an *insouciant* contentment with the 'statu quo;' and, in fact, had created in our New World a sort of China in miniature.

I think it exceedingly reasonable, that the Mexicans should be shy of foreigners. They have been educated in the strict habits of the Catholic creed; they know no language but their own; the customs of their country are different from others; the strangers who visit them are engaged in the eager contests of commercial strife; and, besides being of different religion and language, they are chiefly from those northern nations, whose tastes and feelings have nothing kindred with the impulsive dispositions of the ardent south. In addition to the selfish spirit of gain that pervades the intercourse of these visitors, and gives them no character of permanency or sympathy with the country, they have been accustomed to look down on the Mexicans with contempt for their obsolete habits, without reflecting, that they were not justly censurable for traditional usages which they had no opportunity of improving by comparison with the progress of civilization among other nations.

Yet, treating these people with the frankness of a person accustomed to find himself at home wherever he goes, avoiding the egotism of national prejudices, and meeting them in a spirit of benevolence; I have found them kind, gentle, hospitable, intelligent, benevolent, and brave. Among their better classes no people see more clearly than they do the vices of ill-regulated society and the misery of their political condition; but, when rebuked in the presumptuous and austere spirit of arrogant strangers, they repel the rudeness by distance and reserve. The consequence is, that these disturbers of social decency are seldom the chosen friends or inmates of their dwellings. The Mexicans are a proud and *sensitive* people; yet none are more easily

subdued by kindness—none more easily won by a ready disposition to mingle in their ranks, and treat them with a due respect for their habitudes and their prejudices.

There are but few entertainments given in Mexico, in comparison with those of other cities abroad, where a lavish expenditure in viands, lights, and amusements for the few hours of a single evening, are mistaken for the elegancies and refinements of genuine hospitality;—instead, however, of those ostentatious displays, there are frequent reunions at *turtulias*, where an hour or two are most agreeably spent in friendly intercourse, and the unrestrained flow of pleasant and instructive conversation.

I have already alluded to the extreme of fashionable life, and its disposition for the theatre; and I do not intend to treat again of the propensity of the *ultras* to living thus constantly in the public eye, without devoting a portion of each day to that domestic intercourse and reunion which make the comfort and beauty of an English or American fireside. I speak, however, of that *juste milieu* of society, wherein resides the virtue and intellect of a country; and I had an excellent opportunity of judging of the private life of this class during my stay in the Capital.

It is the *heart* that is in fact the great characteristic of Mexicans, and especially of their females. There is a noble naturalness, an antique generosity about them, which is the parent of a multitude of virtues, and it is by an abandonment of themselves to *impulses*, that so much irregularity and indiscretion have been frequently manifested, both in politics and society.

I have said that the Mexicans are a people of quick talent, and my remark is borne out by the observation of all foreigners. They are quick to apprehend, quick of study, and quick in mastering a subject; but this very facility, joined with their impulsiveness, is often fatal to their enduring application and progress.

I came among these people an entire stran-

ger, without especial claims on their attention, and studious to avoid that bill of exchange hospitality, which is the result of introductory letters from former, and, perhaps, forgotten acquaintances. Yet mingling freely among all classes, and comparing them now—when gratitude for acts of kindness has been long yielded and the annoyance of petty impertinences forgotten—I have none but kindly recollections of the people, and none but favorable impressions of the mass of a society, in which I had been taught to believe that I should be held in utter antipathy as a heretical stranger.

There are, of course, in Mexico as in all other countries, specimens of egotism, selfishness, haughtiness, ill-breeding, and loose morals, both among the men and the women; but, although we find these floating-like bubbles on the *top* of society, they must not therefore be considered the characteristics of the country. You must separate from the multitude the few who sometimes lead and control the masses that do not wish to come in contact or conflict with them. A nation in which 'revolutions and counter-revolutions are events of almost daily occurrence, is naturally prolific in desperate and crafty political adventurers,' and dissimulation and stratagem may, in time, form the chief element of the character of such a people;—yet such, it is hoped, is not to be the corrupting fate of Mexico.

The idea that large social entertainments require great magnificence and lavish expense, deprives the Mexicans, in their towns, of many of those agreeable gatherings which fill up so pleasantly our winter nights and autumn evenings; but it is on their haciendas or plantations, that their hospitality is most distinguished. As you had occasion to remark in the account of my journey to the *tierra caliente*, nothing is withheld from you—their establishments are placed at your entire control, and the welcome is as sincere as it is hearty and cheerful.

That they are brave, none will doubt, who

read the history of their War of Independence, although the bad discipline (especially of their officers,) has prevented the very eminent exhibition of this quality in their battles, with the troops of other nations. In fact, regard them in any way, and they will be found to possess the elements of a fine people who want but peace and the stimulus of foreign emulation, to bring them forward among the nations of the earth with great distinction.

In the summary I have endeavored to present you, of the Mexican character, I must not be charged with inconsistency by those who think I am contradicting what I have previously advanced, either about superstitious customs, or the vices that consign so many to the prison; and make others so reckless of life and fortune. Those are evils begotten by the times and want of resources. At present, I treat neither of political nor social gamblers; neither of female frailties, nor that crafty duplicity which leads to high places in the state; neither of genteel vagrancy, nor the outcast leperos and ignorant Indians who form so large a portion of the population of the country. All these are numerous enough and bad enough. But it has been my task, amid the desolation and ruin of the country, amid the dust and ashes to which a great nation has been reduced by civil war—to seek for some living embers, and to discover sufficient elements of a sound and healthful society, from which the regeneration of the country may be expected. With domestic virtue, genius, and patriotism, no people need despair; and it must be the prayer of every republican that enough of these still remain in Mexico to reconstruct their government and their society.'

The succeeding paragraphs on etiquette, costume, beauty, the 'leperos,' and letter-writers, are from the same interesting author.

'The Mexicans are formally, and I think, substantially, the politest people I have met with. Bowing and shaking hands are common all the world over, and in our coun-

try we do it stiffly, and often gruffly enough. Savages salute one another with a grunt, and the Chinese touch noses. But, in Mexico, there is something more than mere *nonchalant* nods of recognition and farewell. If you enter a Mexican's house, there is no rest among the inmates until you are made perfectly at ease, and your hat and cane taken from you. The lady does not sit on the sofa—nod when you come in as if it were painful to bend or rise—talk with you about the weather as if your rheumatisms made you a species of walking barometer—and then expect you to nod again, and take yourself off as a bore; but a frankness and a warmth are immediately thrown into the manner of the whole household as soon as you appear. No matter what they may be engaged in, or how much occupied; all is forgotten in a moment, and they are entirely at your service. Here, in the United States, I have paid fifteen or twenty visits on a morning with a fashionable lady. To do so in Mexico—a man would be set down as an oddity. A visit *is* a visit—it is intended to be something. People feel that they can see, look at, and pass each other *in the street*; and they think a stare of five minutes from a chair, as meaningless as a stare on one's legs in the highway. In the saloon, they regard it proper to devote much time to the interchange of opinions sociably; and they look upon indifference or a *distract* air, or what would elsewhere be called *fashionable ease*, as little better than rudeness.

Upon entering a room, after any unusual absence, if well known to all the members of the family, you go through the process of an embrace, and the health and occupation of every member of your family are minutely and affectionately inquired for. After a while, if there are girls in the house, a little music will be given, or their drawings, embroidery, or other pretty works displayed, as you are supposed to have an interest in such things. And if you are a particular favorite, the lady

of the mansion, who indulges in a *cigarrito*, will take a delicate one from her golden *ctui*, light it, touch it to her lips, and present it to you.

At parting, the ceremony is very formal. You bid good-bye with an embrace, or, if less acquainted, with a profound bow to each individual; you turn at the door of the saloon, and bow again; the master of the house accompanies you to the head of the stairs, where you shake hands and bow again; you look up from the landing of the first flight of stairs, where you find him ready with another; and as you pass through the court-yard below, (if he like you, or happen to be a person of consideration,) you will find him gazing from among the flowers over the balustrade, and still gracefully nodding farewell! Before this *finale* it is not very safe to put on your hat.

The costume of the lower class of females, as you see them on the street, is the shawl, or *reboso*. *Without it* the dress is scarcely any dress at all: one garment—besides a petticoat—braced with a sash around the waist, while the hair falls in a long plait down the back. *With it*—their costume is made up. Flung gracefully over the left shoulder and passed across the mouth—you see nothing but the eyes, which are her greatest charm, and she never attempts to conceal them or neglect their power.

In speaking of fine eyes, the beautiful feet, and the queenly tread of the Mexican ladies, and their costume, I should not forget to mention that an embroidered India crape shawl, blazing with all the colors of the rainbow, and a *painted fan*, are indispensable portions of a complete dress. The *fan* is none of your new-fangled inventions of feather and finery, but the old-fashioned reed and paper instruments used by our grandmothers. The opening and shutting—the waving and folding of these is an especial language. They touch them to their lips—flirt them wide open—close them—let their bright eyes peep over

the rim—display their jewelled hands and witching eyes, and, in fact, carry on a warfare of graceful coquetry from behind these pasteboard fortresses, that has forced, ere now, many a stout heart to cry for quarter!

Passing from the Cathedral door to the south-eastern portion of the city, you reach the out-skirts, crossing, in your way, the canals from the lake. I have rarely seen such miserable suburbs; they are filled with hovels built of sun-dried bricks, often worn with the weather to the shape of holes in the mud, while on their earthen floors crawl, cook, live and multiply, the wretched-looking population of *leperos*.

This word, I believe, is not pure Spanish, but is derived originally, it is said, from the Castilian *lepra*, or leper; and although they do not suffer from that loathsome malady, they are quite as disgusting.

Blacken a man in the sun; let his hair grow long and tangled, or become filled with vermin; let him plod about the streets in all kinds of dirt for years, and never know the use of brush, or towel, or water even, except in storms; let him put on a pair of leather breeches at twenty, and wear them until forty, without change or ablution; and, over all, place a torn and blackened hat, and a tattered blanket begrimed with abominations; let him have wild eyes, and shining teeth, and features pinched by famine into sharpness; breasts bared and browned, and (if females) with two or three miniatures of the same species trotting after her, and another certainly strapped to her back: combine all these in your imagination, and you will have a recipe for a Mexican lepero.

There, on the canals, around the markets and *pulque* shops, the Indians and these miserable outcasts hang all day long; feeding on fragments, quarreling, drinking, stealing and lying drunk about the pavements, with their children crying with hunger around them.—At night they slink off to these suburbs and coil themselves up on the damp floors of

their lairs, to sleep off the effects of liquor, and to awake to another day of misery and crime. Is it wonderful, in a city with an immense proportion of its inhabitants of such a class, (hopeless in the present and the future,) that there are murderers and robbers?

In the Indian population which pours into the Capital from the lakes, I must say that there is apparently more worth and character. You see them lolling about in their boats on the canals, and passing and repassing in their canoes, plying between the city and Chalco and Tezcuco. It is a beautiful sight to behold these tiny vessels skim like floating gardens to the quays in the morning, laden to the water's edge with the fruits, flowers and vegetables, that hide the skiff that bears them.

Not the least curious among the multitude, with which the side-walk is generally thronged, are about a dozen "*evangelistas*," or "letter-writers," whose post is always on the curb-stones of the eastern front of the Parian. A huge jug of ink is placed beside them; a board rests across their knees; a pile of different colored paper (most of which is either cut, *valentine fashion*, or flourished over and adorned with pen-and-ink ornaments,) is placed on it, and, on a stool before them, sits some disconsolate looking damsel or heart-broken lover, pouring out a passion which the scribes put into becoming phraseology. It is an important trade; and more money is earned in Mexico by this proxy-making love, than perhaps any where else. You can have a "*declaration*" for one *real*; a *scolding letter* for a *mediq*; and an *upbraiding epistle full of daggers*, jealousy, love, and tenderness, (leaving the unfortunate recipient in a very distracted state of mind,) done upon azure paper be-sprinkled with hearts and doves, for the ridiculous price of *twenty-five cents*!

The subjoined paragraphs on the style of beauty, female education, and etiquette, are from the interesting work of Madame Calderon, 'Life in Mexico.'

'On first arriving from the United States, where an ugly woman is a phoenix, one cannot fail to be struck at the first glance with the general absence of beauty in Mexico. It is only by degrees that handsome faces begin to dawn upon us; but, however, it must be remarked that beauty without color is apt to be less striking, and to make less impression on us at first. The brilliant complexion and fine figure of an English woman strike every eye. The beauty of expression and finely chiselled features of a Spaniard steal upon us like a soft moonlight, while a French woman, however plain, has so graceful a manner of saying agreeable things, so charming a tournure, such a *piquante* way of managing her eyes and even her mouth, that we think her a beauty after half an hour's acquaintance, and even lose our admiration for the quiet and high-bred, but less graceful *Anglaise*. The beauty of the women here consists in superb black eyes, very fine dark hair, a beautiful arm and hand, and small, well-made feet. Their defects are, that they are frequently too short and too fat, that their teeth are often bad, and their complexion not the clear olive of the Spaniards, nor the glowing brown of the Italians, but a bilious-looking yellow. Their notion of inserting the foot into a shoe half an inch shorter, ruins the foot and destroys their grace in walking, and, consequently, in every movement. This fashion is, fortunately, beginning to fall into disuse. It is therefore evident, that when a *Mexicana* is endowed with white teeth and a fine complexion, when she has not grown too fat, and when she does not torture her small foot to make it smaller, she must be extremely handsome.

Upon the whole, the handsomest women here are not Mexicans, that is, not born in the capital, but in the provinces. From Puebla, and Jalapa and Vera Cruz we see many distinguished by their brilliant complexions and fine teeth, and who are taller and more graceful than those born in the city of Mex-

ico; precisely as in Spain, where the handsomest women in Madrid are said to be born out of it.

In point of amiability and warmth of manner, I have met with no women who can possibly compete with those in Mexico, and it appears to me that women of all other countries will appear cold and stiff by comparison. To strangers, this is an unfailing charm, and it is to be hoped that whatever advantages they may derive from their intercourse with foreigners, they may never lose this graceful cordiality, which forms so agreeable a contrast with English and American frigidity.

There are no women more affectionate in their manners than those of Mexico. In fact, a foreigner, especially if he be an Englishman and a shy man, and accustomed to the coldness of his fair country women, need only to live a few years here, and understand the language, and become accustomed to the peculiar style of beauty to find the Mexican *Señoritas* perfectly irresistible.

In speaking of the Indian girls in a village out from the city, the same writer says, 'Some of the young women were remarkably handsome, with the most beautiful teeth imaginable, laughing and talking in their native tongue at a great rate as they were washing in the brooks, some their hair and others their clothes. These handsome damsels, one would think, had a mixture of Spanish blood in their veins. A sister of the woman who takes charge of the hacienda where we live is one of the most beautiful creatures I ever beheld. Large eyes, with long dark lashes, black hair nearly touching the ground, teeth like snow, a dark but glowing complexion, a superb figure, with fine arms and hands, and small and beautifully-formed feet. All that is best of Indian and Spanish, 'of dark and bright,' seemed united in her. She is only nineteen. Such beauties as these startle one now and then in some remote village. She belongs no doubt to the *mestizos*, the descen-

dants of whites and Indians, the handsomest race in Mexico.

'You ask me, how Mexican women are educated. In answering you, I must put aside a few brilliant exceptions, and speak *en masse*, the most difficult thing in the world, for these exceptions are always rising up before me like accusing angels, and I begin to think of individuals, when I should keep to generalities. Generally speaking, then, the Mexican Señoras and Señoritas write, read and play a little, sew, and take care of their houses and children. When I say they read, I mean they know how to read; when I say they write, I do not mean that they can always spell; and when I say they play, I do not assert that they have generally a knowledge of music. If we compare their education with that of girls in England, or in the United States, it is not a comparison, but a contrast. Compare it with that of Spanish women, and we shall be less severe upon their *farniente* descendants. In the first place, the climate inclines every one to indolence, both physically and morally. One cannot pore over a book when the blue sky is constantly smiling in at the open windows; then out of doors after ten o'clock, the sun gives us due warning of our tropical latitude, and even though the breeze is so fresh and pleasant, one has no inclination to walk or ride far. Whatever be the cause, I am convinced that it is impossible to take the same exercise with the mind or with the body in this country, as in Europe or in the Northern states. Then as to schools, there are none that can deserve the name, and no governesses. Young girls can have no emulation, for they never meet. They have no public diversion, and no private amusement. There are a few good foreign masters, most of whom have come to Mexico for the purpose of making their fortune, by teaching, or marriage, or both, and whose object, naturally, is to make the most money in the shortest possible time, that they may return home and enjoy it. The children

generally appear to have an extraordinary disposition for music and drawing, yet there are few girls who are proficient in either

When very young, they occasionally attend the schools, where boys and girls learn to read in common, or any other accomplishment that the old women can teach them; but at twelve they are already considered too old to attend these promiscuous assemblages, and masters are got in for drawing and music, to finish their education. I asked a lady the other day if her daughter went to school. 'Good heavens!' said she, quite shocked, 'she is past eleven years old!' It frequently happens that the least well-informed girls are the children of the cleverest men, who, keeping to the customs of their forefathers, are content if they confess regularly, attend church constantly, and can embroider and sing a little. Where there are more extended ideas, it is chiefly amongst families who have travelled in Europe, and have seen the different education of women in foreign countries. Of these, the fathers occasionally devote a short portion of their time to the instruction of their daughters, perhaps during their leisure evening moments, but it may easily be supposed that this desultory system has little real influence on the minds of the children. I do not think there are above half a dozen married women, or as many girls above fourteen, who, with the exception of the mass-book, read any one book through in the whole course of the year. They thus greatly simplify the system of education in the United States, where parties are frequently divided between the advocates for solid learning and those for superficial accomplishments; and according to whom it is difficult to amalgamate the solid beef of science with the sweet sauce of *les beaux arts*.

But if a Mexican girl is ignorant she rarely shows it. They have generally the greatest possible tact; never by any chance wandering out of their depth, or betrayed by word or sign that they are not well informed

on the subject under discussion. Though seldom graceful, they are never awkward, and always self-possessed. They have plenty of natural talent, and where it has been thoroughly cultivated, no women can surpass them. Of what is called literary society, there is of course none—

‘No bustling Botherbys have they to shew ’em
That charming passage in the last new poem.’

The following, from the same work, is an Editor’s preface to a little Annual, dedicated to the ladies. The opinion of the polite Editor, Galvan, doubtless coincides with that of his countrymen generally, respecting the lovelier part of creation in Mexico.

“To none,” he says, “better than to Mexican ladies, can I dedicate this mark of attention. Their graceful attractions well deserve any trouble that may have been taken to please them. Their bodies are graceful as the palms of the desert; their hair, black as ebony, or golden as the rays of the sun, gracefully waves over their delicate shoulders; their glances are like the peaceful light of the moon. The Mexican ladies are not so white as the Europeans, but their whiteness is more agreeable to our eyes. Their words are soft, leading our hearts by gentleness, in the same manner as in their moments of just indignation they appal and confound us. Who can resist the magic of their song, always sweet, always gentle, and always natural? Let us leave to foreign ladies these affected and scientific manners of singing; here nature surpasses art, as happens in everything notwithstanding the cavilings of the learned.

‘And what shall I say of their souls? I shall say that in Europe the minds are more cultivated, but in Mexico the hearts are more amiable. Here they are not only sentimental, but tender; not only soft, but virtuous; the body of a child is not more sensitive, nor a rose-bud softer. I have seen souls as beautiful as the borders of the rain-

bow, and purer than the drops of dew. Their passions are seldom tempestuous, and even then they are kindled and extinguished easily; but generally they emit a peaceful light, like the morning star, Venus. Modesty is painted in their eyes, and modesty is the greatest and most irresistible fascination of their souls. In short, the Mexican ladies, by their manifold virtues, are destined to serve as our support whilst we travel through the sad desert of life.

‘Well do these attractions merit that we should try to please them; and in effect a new form, new lustre, and new graces have been given to the “Annual of the Mexican Ladies,” whom the editor submissively entreats to receive with benevolence this small tribute due to their enchantments and their virtues!’

One more extract from the same authoress, on sincerity and politeness.

‘Had a dispute this morning with an Englishman, who complains bitterly of Mexican insincerity. I believe the chief cause of this complaint amongst foreigners consists in their attaching the slightest value to the common phrase, *‘Esta a la disposicion de V.’* Everything is placed at your disposal—house, carriage, servants, horses, mules, &c.—the lady’s ear-rings, the gentleman’s diamond pin, the child’s frock. You admire a ring—it is perfectly at your service; a horse—*ditto*.—Letters are dated ‘from your house;’ (*de la casa de V.*) Some from ignorance of the custom, and others from knavery, take advantage of these offers, which are mere expressions of civility, much to the confusion and astonishment of the polite *offerer*, who has no more intention of being credited, than you have when, from common etiquette, you sign yourself the very humble servant of the greatest bore. It is a mere habit, and to call people who indulge in it insincere, reminds me of the Italian mentioned somewhere by Lady Blessington, who thought he had made a conquest of a fair Englishwoman, though somewhat shocked at her forwardness, be-

cause in an indifferent note to him, she signed herself, '*Truly yours.*' Shall I ever forget the crest-fallen countenance of a Mexican gentleman who had just purchased a very handsome set of London harness, when hearing it admired by a Frenchman, he gave the customary answer, 'It is quite at your disposal,' and was answered by a profusion of bows, and a ready acceptance of the offer! the only difficulty with the Frenchman being as to whether or not he could carry it home under his cloak, which he did.

If all these offers of service, in which it is Mexican etiquette to indulge, be believed in—'Remember that I am here but to serve you'—'My house and everything in it, is quite at your disposal'—'Command me in all things;' we shall of course be disappointed by finding that notwithstanding these reiterated assurances, we must hire a house for ourselves, and even servants to wait on us; but take these expressions at what they are worth, and I believe we shall find that people here are about as sincere as their neighbors.

The following is a good specimen of Mexican etiquette from the same work :

'I have passed nearly a week in a slight fe-

ver; shivering and hot. I was attended by a doctor of the country, who seems the most harmless creature imaginable. Every day he felt my pulse, and gave me some little innocent mixture. But what he especially gave me, was a lesson in polite conversation. Every day, we had the following dialogue, as he rose to take leave.

'Madam! (this by the bed-side) I am at your service.'

'Many thanks, sir.'

'Madam! (this at the foot of the bed) know me for your most humble servant.'

'Good morning, sir.'

'Madam! (here he stopped beside a table) I kiss your feet.'

'Sir, I kiss your hand.'

'Madam! (this near the door) my poor house, and all in it, myself, though useless, all I have, is yours.'

'Many thanks, sir.'

He turns round and opens the door, again turning round as he does so,

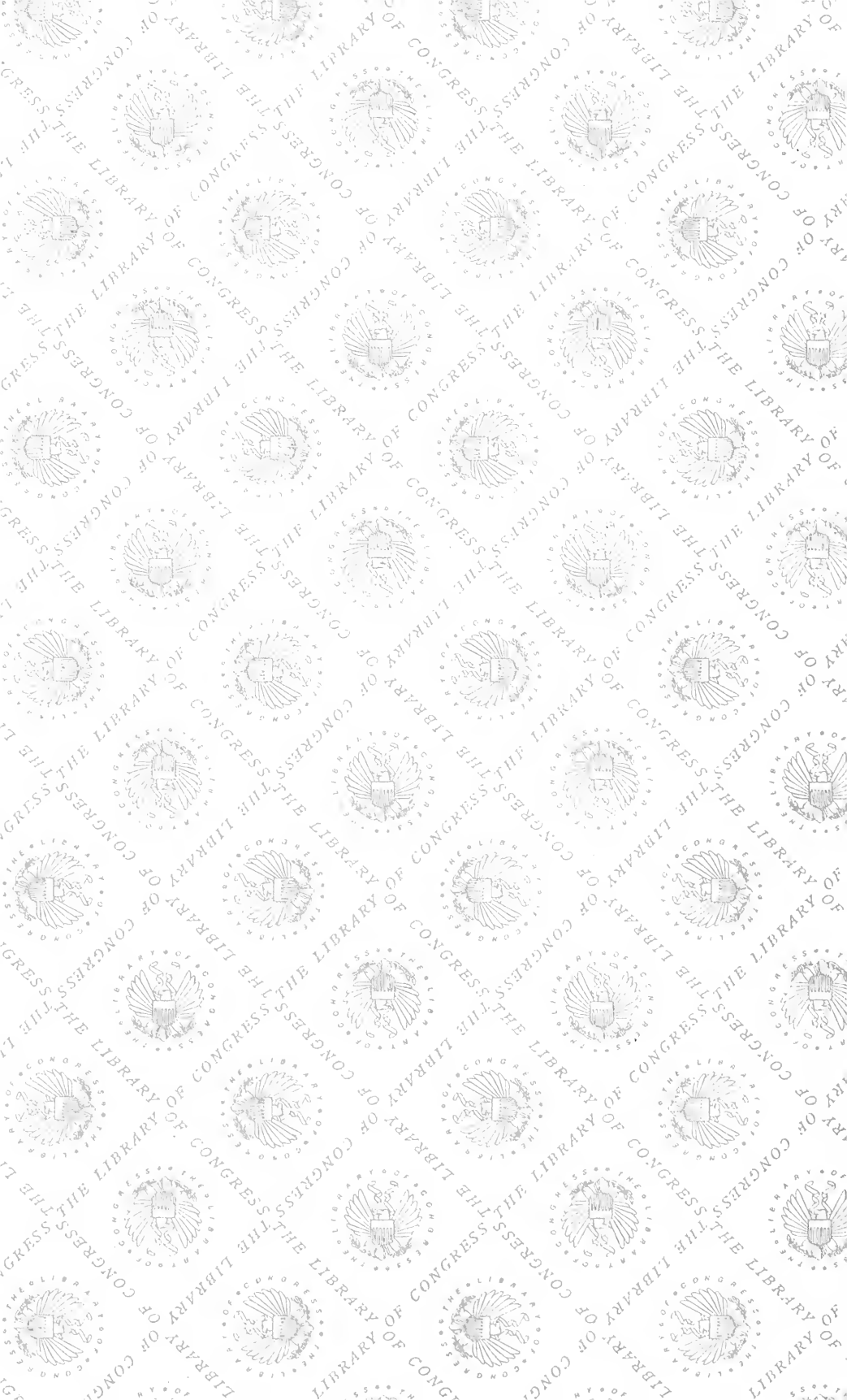
'Adieu, Madam! your servant.'

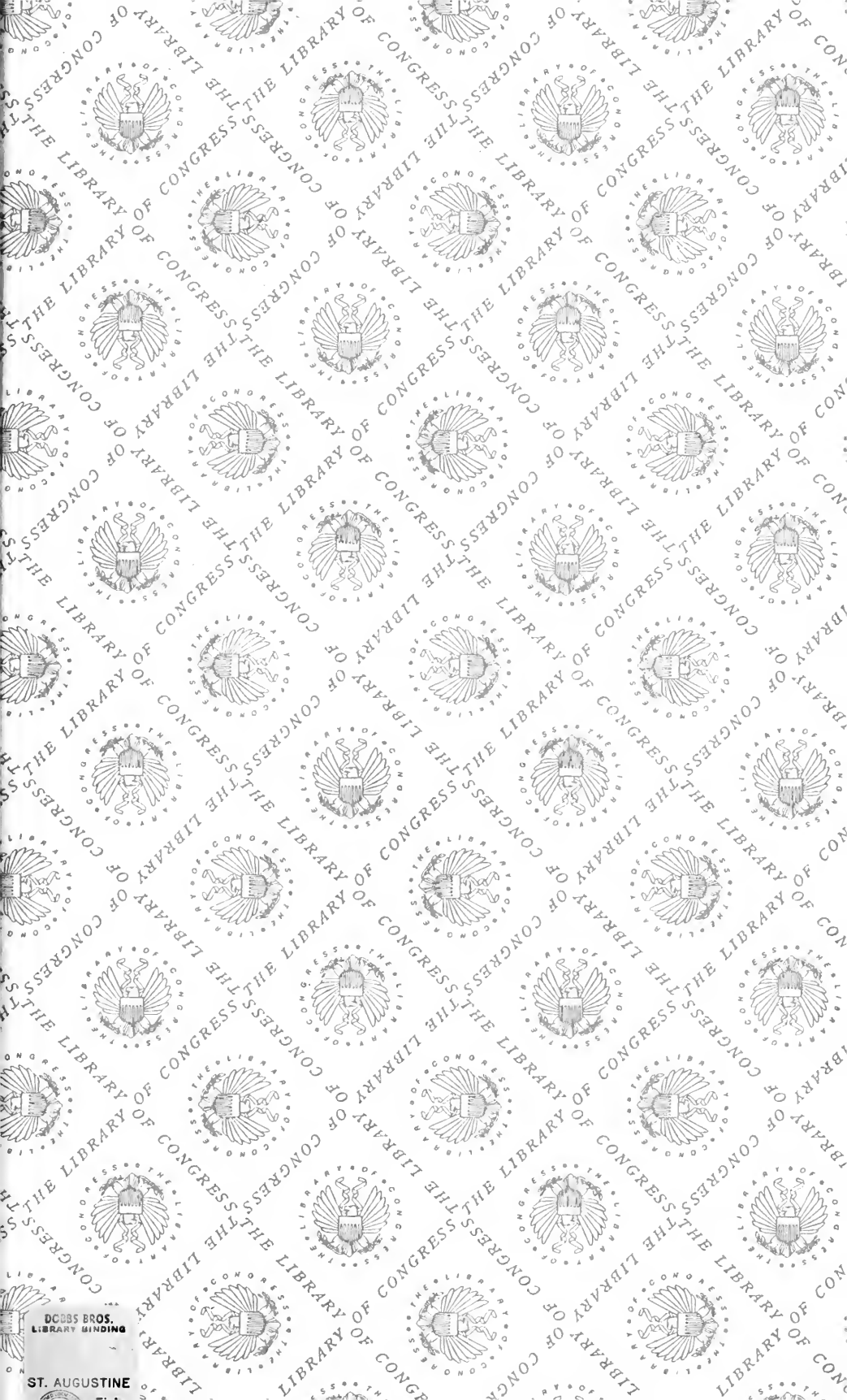
'Adieu, sir.'

He goes out, partly re-opens the door, and puts in his head,

'Good morning Madam!'

THE END.

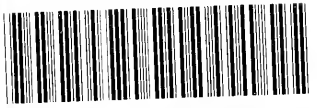




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